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MAXIMILIAN THE DREAMER

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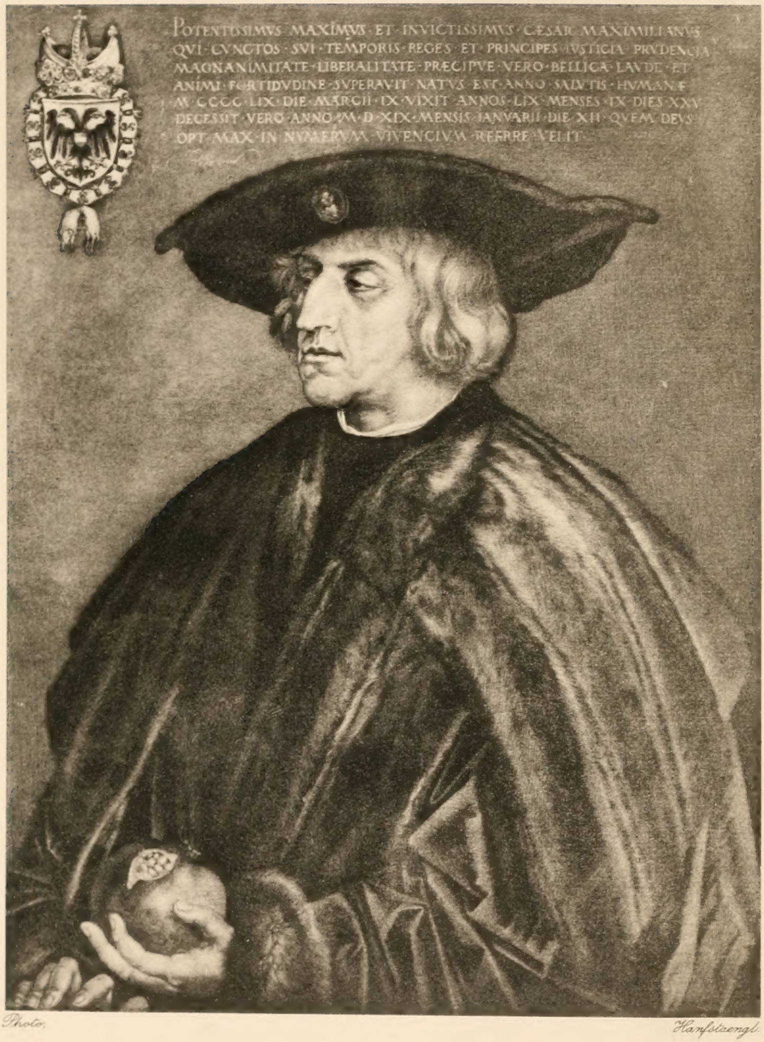
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Maximilian I.

Holy Roman Emperor.

Albrecht Dürer.

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MAXIMILIAN
THE DREAMER

HOLY ROMAN EMPEROR 1459—1519

BY
CHRISTOPHER HARE

AUTHOR OF
"THE ROMANCE OF A MEDICI WARRIOR," "A PRINCESS OF THE ITALIAN REFORMATION," "CHARLES DE BOURBON," "ISABELLA OF MILAN," ETC.

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GENEALOGY OF MAXIMILIAN

Emperor FREDERICK III = 1452 Eleonora of Portugal
d. 1493 — *d.* 1467

Kunigonda = 1487 Albert IV
d. 1520 — Duke of Bavaria

MAXIMILIAN I = 1477 (1st) Marie of Burgundy
b. 1459; *d.* 1519 — *b.* 1457; *d.* 1482
Emperor 1493—1519 — (2nd) = 1494 Bianca Maria Sforza
d. 1511

Philippe I = 1496 Juana of Spain
b. 1478; *d.* 1506 — *b.* 1479; *d.* 1555
Archduke of the Netherlands
King of Castile

Marguerite
b. 1480; *d.* 1530
Regent of the Netherlands
m. (1st) Juan Infante of Spain, 1497
(2nd) Philibert II Duke of Savoy, 1501

Eleonora, *b.* 1498; *d.* 1558; *m.* 1519 (1st) Emanuel King of Portugal; (2nd) 1529, François I King of France

Charles V, Emperor, *b.* 1500; *d.* 1556; *m.* Isabella of Portugal

Isabel, *b.* 1501; *d.* 1526; *m.* 1515 Christian II of Denmark

Ferdinand I, Emperor, *b.* 1503; *d.* 1564; *m.* 1521 Anne of Hungary

Marie, *b.* 1505; *d.* 1558; *m.* 1521 Louis II of Hungary

Catalina, *b.* 1507; *m.* Joam III of Portugal

INTRODUCTION

THE life of Maximilian I of Austria is not only a great historical drama of the last Holy Roman Emperor of the ancient régime, but it almost attains to the romantic interest of an epic poem, with a royal knight for its hero, in the closing day of mediæval chivalry.

Maximilian stands forth as a typical figure of his time; heir to the great traditions of a Cæsar, a Theodoric, and a Charlemagne, he dreamed of mighty deeds and sought to carry out his high ideal, inspired at once by real patriotism and a lofty ambition for his race. He could never rest satisfied with the near present, but laboured with enthusiasm for distant aims whose fruition he would never see. Again and again he was doomed to disappointment in his political career, for his restless energy and many-sided point of view interfered with that narrow, dogged persistence in one definite aim which wins success. The will-o'-the-wisp of Italian conquest had an invincible attraction for him, and lured him on—as it did many a King of France—to failure and disaster.

An idealist and a dreamer, the Emperor won his truest claim to greatness, not so much by his wars or his diplomacy, as by his warm sympathy with every phase of modern thought and aspiration. His keen appreciation and eager encouragement of the new spirit of the age in literature and art made him the beloved of the scholar and the poet, who both welcomed him as the ideal Emperor of Dante's vision.

Full of the joy of life which rose superior to every disappointment, a most gallant soldier who created the splendid "landsknechte" for his country's service, a fearless, unrivalled hunter, a writer on every subject under the sun; he was also the very mirror of knightly courtesy. The wonderful fascination of his genial, gracious manner, and his sympathetic tact in personal intercourse with rich and poor, won all hearts. Kaiser Max, as his people called him, was the darling of his German and Tyrolese subjects. He was the first patriot king of modern times, and his proud motto "My honour is German honour, and German honour is my honour," shows us how he felt himself one in joy and sorrow, in defeat and in glory, with his people.

As for the greatness of his House of Hapsburg, in this, by diplomacy and by alliances, he was so supremely successful that it was mainly due to him that his grandson Charles V became the monarch of a world-wide Empire on which the sun never set. Maximilian had the defects of his qualities. He was generous and extravagant, he formed magnificent plans which he was unable to carry out, he was self-confident and vain-glorious with a naïve, airy conceit, seeing all his deeds through a rosy glamour. But these very failings make him more human and lovable to us, and we cannot begrudge him the happiness of that gay, genial temper. Even his dying hours were soothed and comforted by listening once more to the famous deeds of his ancestors, for the ruling passion was strong in death.

As we look upon the wonderful monument in the Hofkirche at Innsbrück, raised by his will and according to his design, we seem dimly to realise the glamour and romance of Maximilian's ideals. He kneels in the centre surrounded by the four cardinal virtues. Around the nave, in a long line of bronze statues, is gathered the stately company of heroes and saints of his race—or his dreams—who keep their silent watch, in one long, unbroken vigil, over the departed greatness of the Holy Roman Empire. For, by the irony of fate, the magnificent tomb is empty, and the dust of Maximilian rests elsewhere.

MAXIMILIAN THE DREAMER

CHAPTER I

THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

The meaning and value of Maximilian's title " Romanorum Imperator semper Augustus "—Descent of the Holy Roman Empire from the Dominion of the Cæsars—A brief review of the " Decline and Fall " which left Rome the centre of the religious power of the Church—Influence of the Emperor Constantine—Invasion of the Goths—The coming of Charlemagne—The story of his successors—Emperor and Pope—Pope Gregory VII triumphs, 1273*—The Hapsburgs enter on the scene—Visionary hopes of Dante—The secret of the Church's power in the Middle Ages.*

BY way of introduction to the history of the Emperor Maximilian I, it may be well to explain the meaning and value of his stately title: "Romanorum Imperator semper Augustus." These words carry on a splendid tradition: the descent of the Holy Roman Empire from the world-wide dominion of a Cæsar Augustus.

I need not dwell here upon the familiar and enthralling story of the "Decline and Fall" of the mighty Empire of Rome, when the pride of imperial sway was finally humbled in the dust by the conquering hordes of Northern Barbarians who learnt, in time, to revere that which they destroyed, and to accept the Faith and the civilisation of their forerunners. After centuries of fierce strife and bloodshed, of anarchy and desolation, the conversion of Constantine changed the face of the world, for Rome in her fall left the Christian Church as an enduring witness and, when the Empire fell to pieces, the Eternal City still remained the centre of a religious power which rivalled the secular dominion of bygone Emperors.

The Emperor Constantine was also responsible for hastening the division of the Empire, by moving the imperial residence to Byzantium: this being finally settled on the death of Theodosius (A.D. 395), when Arcadius succeeded to the Eastern Empire and Honorius to the Western. Next we follow the devastating course of an Alaric and an Attila, and we see the Frankish kingdom rise above its rivals in power and dignity, until Charles Martel saves Europe and Christianity by his decisive victory on the field of Poitiers, over the terrible host of Arab invaders.

Once more East and West are united under the strong rule of Odoacer the son of a Skyrrian chieftain, who in his turn is overthrown by Theodorich the Ostrogoth, the first Barbarian Emperor who, from his palace at Verona, seeks to strengthen the ancient policy of Rome, to mete out equal laws, and to revive the study of letters. We see the feeble successors of Theodorich deposed by the wise Justinian (535–

553), who conquers Italy and Sicily, divides Italy into counties and dukedoms, and is renowned in the annals of peace by his enduring Code of Roman Law. As new kingdoms rise and fall, and with ever-changing fortune of war and conquest, the centuries pass on ; we reach at length a new era in the world's history.

More than three hundred years had elapsed since the last Cæsar of the Western Empire had resigned his post and left the Emperor of the East sole ruler of the Roman world when, from a far corner of Europe, a great chieftain came to the front. It was not from the exhausted soil of Italy that the coming deliverer was to arise, for the hopes of men were turned towards the Frankish kingdom which was now supreme amongst the lordships which had risen from the ruins of Roman power. The Frank had ever been faithful to Rome, and the destined hero, the Lord of Western Europe, had already earned the title of Champion of the Holy See. It was from the alliance of secular and religious power that arose the settled Empire of the West, on that eventful Christmas Day, A.D. 800, when in the ancient Basilica of St. Peter, Charlemagne, and his captains of war were assembled to hear Mass.

The scene rises before us in all its solemn majesty. We see, behind the arch of triumph, the apse filled with a stately array of priests in row above row, while in the midst rose high the Bishop's curule throne. Prostrate before the high altar knelt Charlemagne, wearing the chlamys and sandals of a Roman Patrician, when Pope Leo III came down from his chair of state and placed the crown of Cæsar upon the brow of the Frankish chieftain. Then as the Pontiff bent in obeisance before the Emperor, the acclamations of the multitude greeted his election with the ancient cry: "To Charles the most pious Augustus, crowned by God, the great peace-giving Emperor, Life and Victory!"

Charlemagne had already received the silver crown of Germany at Aix-la-Chapelle and the iron crown of Lombardy at Milan, and by this ceremonial act accepted the golden diadem of Rome, as coming naturally to him by right of his high position. The Pope crowns him, not by any special authority, but simply "as the instrument of God's providence which has pointed out Charlemagne as the chosen person to lead the Christian commonwealth." The people by their applause merely accept the Emperor presented to them.

But this event assumed a very different aspect in the years to come, when the relation between Pope and Emperor would be no longer one of mutual support, but too often of strife and rivalry. Then the Emperor would be convinced that his great ancestor had won the imperial dominion by right of conquest; while the Pontiff would maintain that Pope Leo, as God's earthly Vicar, gave the crown to the man of his choice. We wonder whether Charlemagne himself had any premonition of the inference which might be drawn in the future from the precedent of his coronation by Leo III? Some accounts represent him as having been surprised and disconcerted by this sudden conclusion of his act of reverence before the altar of St. Peter's; and we cannot forget that he crowned his son Lewis with his own hand.

Whether the honour was prematurely thrust upon him or not, henceforth a halo of imaginative splendour surrounded this renewal of the Empire, for he was believed to have attained to nothing less than the lordship of the world.

We can but briefly glance at the tangled story of the successors of Charlemagne. His son Lewis was too feeble to uphold the mighty inheritance, and was driven by his very piety and gentleness to divide the Empire amongst his three rebellious sons, with the inevitable and fatal result of civil war and mutual destruction. From north and south the Barbarians rushed in, endless strife and cruel oppression of the weak followed the breaking up a great empire, until the overwhelming extent of the evil worked its own cure in the end. The German princes united in self-defence and chose an overlord of the race of Charlemagne, Conrad Duke of Franconia, and his successor Henry the Fowler, prepared the way for the strong monarchy of his son Otto the Great. This chivalrous prince had rescued the widowed Queen of Italy, Adelheid, who later became his wife. The appeal of his courage and his knightly fame won the hearts of the people, who felt that here was a man worthy to be the supreme Emperor whom they so greatly needed. Otto crossed the Alps with a mighty Saxon host, and, with Adelheid as his Empress, he was crowned by Pope John II in the Roman Church of St. John Lateran, on February 2, A.D. 962.

It is interesting to trace the origin of that undying and deeply rooted desire in the Middle Ages, both for a visible centre of Religion and of Empire. That intensely practical age could only grasp its ideal in a concrete form, and to such a state of mind the Universal Faith and the Universal Empire appealed with irresistible force. Through the long ages of strife and change, the power of the Church in Rome had been steadily growing, while her dogmas became more fixed and definite, until the simple teaching of the Christian Gospel could scarcely be recognised in the theological doctrines given forth with authority at Conclave and Council. The visible Church—with its mighty Pontiff, whose absolute rule, by means of a well-graded hierarchy, extended to the whole priesthood throughout the known world—alone held the keys of heaven and ruled supreme over the souls of men. The Crusades were a symbol of this belief in things seen—in the efficacy of outward deeds; thus it was easier for a man to go forth with pomp and tumult to fight the Turk, than to stay at home and conquer his evil passions.

And as in the religious world, so in the temporal, men recognised the absolute need of a universal State and one supreme Lord. This instinctive belief was an inheritance transmitted from the awe and respect with which the Roman Empire had ever been looked upon by the Barbarian world, in the days when it was thus expressed by the Goth Athanarich in the market-place of Constantinople: "Without doubt the Emperor is a God upon earth, and he who attacks him is guilty of his own blood."

As the Pope was the Vicar of God, so the Emperor was His Viceroy on earth, to rule men in this life and to ensure their obedience to the Church which it was his duty to protect. Thus were linked together the Holy Roman Church and the Holy Roman Empire; and in the religious writing of the Middle Ages, the rights and privileges of both are learnedly proved by an endless variety of texts and fanciful allegories in the Bible.

In the person of Otto the Great, the Roman Empire and the German Kingdom were united under one rule. In Germany he was Head both of Church and State, and he transformed the Germans from a collection of tribes into a single people with a feeling of national life. Here he was on safe ground; but the much-vaunted alliance of Pope and Emperor was destined to prove most precarious and deceptive. After the death of Otto I in 973, the next Emperor of note was his grandson Otto III, who chose three successive Popes; with the assistance of one of these, his tutor, the learned Gerbert (Sylvester II), he sought to reform the world by mystic and religious influences for which the times were not ripe. Another ambition of his was to carry out his father's plan of drawing Italy and Germany more closely together and uniting them in the bonds of fellowship. But this ardent saintly youth did not live long enough to carry out his inspired plans, and was lamented as "the wonder of the world" by a sorrowing people. Otto III left no heir, and was followed by a succession of incompetent rulers until, under Henry III, the Empire once more reached its high-water mark, and even obtained from a Roman Synod the right of making and deposing Popes.

This was but a passing interlude, for in 1073 a great Pontiff was to arise who would assert and maintain the absolute dominion of spiritual authority, proclaiming that to the Vicar of God all men are subject and all rulers responsible. It was the famous Hildebrand, Pope Gregory VII, who exalted the Pope's authority to a height never attained before; he brought a rebellious Emperor (Henry IV) as a lowly suppliant to his feet, and wrote a letter of unheard-of audacity to William the Conqueror. He also had the foresight to vest the election of future Popes in the College of Cardinals, with whom it has remained ever since.

Henceforth the power of the Church was to prevail; it was not weakened by long minorities, and had but little to fear from rebellion amongst the great world-wide army of the dependent priesthood. Yet the struggle continued with varying fortunes until we find Frederick I, surnamed by the Italians "Barbarossa," as masterful in his claim for the Empire as Hildebrand had been for the Church. Meantime a new power was slowly coming to the front which would in time be too mighty for both Pope and Emperor; the cities were beginning to feel their strength and to insist upon their rights. A cry for freedom was heard in the land, and under the just and temperate rule of the great Frederick, a Third Order slowly and steadily arose to claim dominion in the State. In after days, when cruelty and oppression were at their worst, the legend grew that the red-bearded Emperor would awake from his enchanted sleep in the far-off mountain cave where they had hidden him, and that his shield would once more be hung out in his camp, as a signal of help to the oppressed and down-trodden.

In 1273 we see the coming of the Hapsburgs under Rudolf of Austria,[1] who was chosen by the electors under a threat from Pope Gregory X, that "if they did not choose an Emperor, he would do so." A new era had now arisen when the Empire slowly declined in authority, although it still survived as an international power, for in it were centred nobility and knighthood, supported by the great Orders of chivalry. In the literary revival of this period, the Empire was exalted as the model of a Christian Commonwealth, and we find Dante looking towards his beloved Emperor, Henry VII, as the mainstay of his political hopes. Men of law share the visionary zeal of the poet, and they solemnly declare that "no laws can bind the Emperor, to whom all Christendom is of right subject, and who is answerable only to God." Yet when Frederick III, the father of Maximilian, received the iron crown of Lombardy as well as the imperial crown in 1452, these honours brought with them no real authority, although the later Hapsburg Emperors still clung to the visionary belief that the imperial rights of their predecessors would strengthen at home their dynastic and personal claims. Frederick III was the last Emperor to be crowned in Rome, for, as Gibbon says,

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[1] Rudolf had been faithful to the Empire, and had accompanied the gallant, chivalrous young Conradin on his fatal journey to Italy.

"his successors have excused themselves from the toilsome pilgrimage to the Vatican, and rest their imperial title on the choice of the electors of Germany." For by this time the Holy Roman Empire was lost in the Germanic, although the title gave a precedence amongst the nations of Europe.

If the Empire brought neither territory nor treasure, it still had influence and prestige in the light of its former glory. The "King of the Romans" was still "the greatest of earthly potentates in dignity and rank." The glory of Rome might fade, but the magic of her name remained unchanged through the centuries. In her literature, her laws, and her institutions she had gathered up all the richest treasures of ancient thought. The language which she had inherited from her great ancestors, and the religion which she had made her own, had found a new home wherever civilisation had spread throughout the world.

The power of the Holy Roman Empire and the Holy Roman Church had arisen in an age when men bowed low before authority and tradition, as the only safeguards in a world of violence and lawless disorder. The wise thinker, who alone was capable of asserting his own private judgment, could not fail to see that to do so would be another element of unrest and, for the most part, held his peace. The only hope of salvation for the world was in absolute unreasoning obedience; and this could best be enforced by spiritual terrors, for the mediæval age was one of Faith when, if the mystical joys of heaven were vague in their ideal beauty, there was a very definite and concrete belief in the torments of hell, awaiting any rebellion against the powers of the visible Church. The mere layman had only to obey the priest, whose business it was to arrange matters for the unseen world, and all would be well.

An incident of the period will illustrate this. We are told that a certain La Hire, a rough captain of a band of soldiers, was on his way to help the besieged garrison of Montargis, in the year 1427. On his hurried journey he met a priest and paused to beg for absolution. He was naturally bidden to confess his sins first, but La Hire replied : " I have no time, for I am in haste to attack the English ; moreover I have but done as all soldiers are wont to do." The priest having unwillingly consented to this uncanonical act, the soldier hastened onwards to battle, with his mind quite at rest either for this world or the next.

CHAPTER II

BIRTH AND LINEAGE OF MAXIMILIAN—HIS EARLY LIFE

1440—1463

The Emperor Frederick III, father of Maximilian—His friendship with Ænea Silvio Piccolimini (Pope Pius II)—Frederick III marries Eleanora of Portugal—Last Imperial Coronation in Rome—Fall of Constantinople, 1493—*Birth of Maximilian,* 1459—*His youth and education—He is betrothed to Marie, daughter of Charles of Burgundy.*

THE last chapter has brought down the history of the Holy Roman Empire to the time of the Emperor Frederick III, the father of Maximilian. On the death of his cousin, Albert II, in 1444, after a reign of two years, Frederick Duke of Styria, a Hapsburg of the younger line, was elected as his successor, but unfortunately he had neither the courage nor the energy needful at that critical time in the condition of Europe. Germany, weak and divided, found herself threatened on every side by powerful neighbours, and the new ruler was not equal to command the political situation, for he was even unable to defend himself against his rebellious subjects.

No historian appears to have a good word to say for him; he is described as "slow and phlegmatic, cold and unenterprising, and of an obstinate disposition." His ministers found it difficult to obtain his interest in affairs of State, from which he turned away with relief to devote himself to his favourite pursuits of gardening, alchemy, and astrology. Yet if other qualities predominated in his later years, he must have had some youthful spirit and energy, for we hear of his joining eagerly in an expedition to the Holy Land when a mere boy.

An interesting incident, which gives us a very vivid idea of those stormy days, took place in the year 1444, only a few years after Frederick III had come to the throne of Germany. He was engaged in a troublesome war with the Swiss, and it occurred to him that he might obtain help from his neighbour the King of France. Now it happened at the time that Charles VII was much exercised in mind as to how he could rid his country of the immense companies of mercenary ruffians, who had been engaged to help in the civil wars of France, and who, when not actually engaged in fighting for pay, ravaged and destroyed the land which harboured them. The "Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris" gives a most terrible account of these bands who robbed and murdered on all sides, "making the land desolate, villages burnt, churches robbed, and everything destroyed . . ." In this application of the Emperor Frederick, King Charles saw his opportunity. He resolved to collect all these "gens terribles, troupeaux de voleurs," and send them to fight against the Swiss, and thus be killed or got rid of, under the command of his son the Dauphin Louis, whose turbulent spirit required some active employment.

This amazing plan was actually carried out, and at last an undisciplined multitude of about 30,000, led by their own captains, French, Lombard, Gascon, Breton, English, Scotch, Spanish—set forth with a boy of twenty-one at their head, afterwards Louis XI. They spread terror and dismay on every side in the countries through which they passed, and we cannot wonder that Frederick inquired, "Why so great an army of barbarians had come?" and soon had cause to dread his allies more than his enemies. "The mighty horde reached the neighbourhood of Basel, and there, almost within sight of the fathers of Christendom, who were holding a council, the battle of St. Jacques was fought on August 26, 1444. A handful of Swiss fought with heroic courage until overwhelmed by numbers . . . and never were men known to sell their lives more dearly." After this victory the Dauphin was able to make his own terms with the Swiss, after the siege of Dambach, where he was wounded in the knee by an arrow. Before the end of the year he returned home with an escort of two thousand horsemen, leaving the terrible host of adventurers behind, to the dismay and consternation of the unfortunate population, who at length rose in fury against their devouring foes. These "routiers," scattered and undisciplined, were attacked and cut to pieces on every side, so that by the following April, 1445, Alsace was practically free from their reign of terror. So it was that this amazing adventure came to an end!

Frederick III was fortunate in the friendship and service of Ænea Silvio Piccolomini, who became his secretary in 1442, and after being Bishop of Siena was elected Pope in 1458, under the name of Pius II. He was a man of literary tastes, and had been crowned Poet Laureate by Frederick, who sent him as his envoy to Pope Eugenius IV, in 1445. It was this visit to Rome which decided Piccolomini to turn away from his pagan life to the study of theology and enter the Church, in which he had rapid advancement.

It was when he was Bishop of Siena that he presided over one of the most interesting events in the life of his patron Frederick III, who, in that fair city, was first introduced to his bride, Eleonora of Portugal. There is a most interesting picture of this meeting by Pinturicchio, one of a series in the Library of the Duomo of Siena, illustrating the whole life of Pope Pius II. We see the picturesque Porta Camollia, on that 24th day of February, 1452, with a stately company assembled to do honour to the occasion. The Bishop in his mitre stands in the centre, and on his left hand the fair young princess of Portugal, accompanied by her ladies in beautiful dresses, while, on the right hand, the Emperor elect[1] bends forward to clasp hands with his lady, supported by Duke Albert of Austria and the young King Wladislav of Hungary and Bohemia. It was his first sight of his future bride, and we may well imagine his somewhat nervous curiosity. As Ænea Silvio himself wrote in his "Historia Friderici Imp.," page 73):

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[1] Not yet crowned in Rome.

"The Cæsar at first turned pale when he saw his bride coming in the distance. But when she drew near, and he beheld more clearly her beautiful face and royal bearing, he recovered himself and his colour returned, and he rejoiced exceedingly. For he found that his lovely bride was even more charming than report had said, and he was greatly relieved to find that he had not been deceived by vain words, as so often happens to princes who make their marriage contract by means of a procurator."

As this lady was the mother of our Emperor Maximilian, it will be interesting to tell more about her. She came of good lineage on both sides, as she was the granddaughter of Philippa of Lancaster,[1] and she seems to have inherited many of the fine qualities of the Plantagenet race. Her father was Edouarte King of Portugal, and she was the elder sister of King Affonso III, surnamed the African, as his spirit of adventure had led him to make frequent incursions and conquests in Africa. He was keenly alive to the value of making good alliances for his sisters; one he married to the King of Castile, and tried to arrange a match for another with King Edward IV of England. This alliance of Frederick III with Eleonora was his greatest success.

In later years Maximilian wrote a very exciting account in his "Weisskünig," of the journey to Rome in great state of the imperial couple, whose marriage was finally celebrated in Rome the same year, 1452, when Frederick received the iron crown of Lombardy, and also the imperial crown from the hands of Pope Calixtus III (Alfonso Borgia), in the ancient Basilica of St. Peter. This imperial coronation is especially interesting as being the last which took place in Rome.

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[1] Daughter of John of Gaunt.

The great event of the following year, which filled all Europe with consternation, was the fall of Constantinople, which was captured by the overwhelming force of the Ottoman Turks under the Sultan Mohammed II, on May 29, 1453. Constantine XIII, the last of the Paleologi, fell in the siege, exclaiming with his last breath that "it was better to die than live." Great was the triumph of the Turks at this fatal blow to the Eastern Empire, and they were inspired with the hope of spreading the faith of Islam through all the Western Empire also. Already the navy of the Sultan swept the shores of the Mediterranean, their well-trained army was about to invade Hungary and already threatened the safety of Vienna. We cannot wonder that a priest like the Bishop of Siena should throw his whole soul into the hope of rolling back the tide of Turkish invasion, and write at once to Pope Nicholas V in such burning words as these:

"Mohammed is among us; the sabre of the Turk waves over our head; the Black Sea is shut to our ships; the foe passes Wallachia, whence they will pass into Hungary and Germany. And we, meanwhile, live in strife and enmity amongst ourselves. The Kings of France and England are at war, the princes of Germany have leapt to arms against one another; Spain is seldom at peace, Italy never wins repose from conflicts for alien lordships. How much better to turn our arms against the enemies of our Faith! It falls upon you, Holy Father, to unite the Kings and princes and urge them to gather together and take counsel for the safety of the Christian world!"

The Emperor Frederick III, who was perhaps more nearly touched by this disaster than any other sovereign, also wrote to the Pope, and he issued a Bull to impose a tithe for this war! This was the usual action of the Popes. The money came in from all parts of Europe in the first shock of bad news, but it remained in the coffers of the Vatican, and not one crown was spent on fighting the invading infidels. If the Bishop Ænea Silvio was not successful in starting another crusade, his zeal for the cause may have been a reason for his being made Cardinal three years after the fall of Constantinople. Six years later, on the death of Calixtus III, he was elected Pope (September 3, 1458), and took the name of Pius II. One of the disappointed Cardinals asked: "Shall we raise a poet to the Chair of St. Peter, and suffer the Church to be governed with pagan principles?"

In the Library of the Duomo of Siena there is a fine fresco by Pinturicchio of the new Pope Pius II being carried in procession to give his benediction to the city and the world, while the Master of the Ceremonies burns a piece of tow before him with the traditional warning: "Sancte Pater, sic transit gloria mundi." Another picture here represents the Pope opening the Congress of Mantua, in 1459, and striving in vain to rouse the Crusading zeal of Christendom; an heroic dream never to be realised.

One of the Pope's most ardent supporters was the Empress Eleonora of Portugal, the wife of Frederick III, who in this same year 1459, on May 22, gave birth to her only son, Maximilian, in the ancient castle of Neustadt, in Carinthia, a few miles south-east of Vienna. So eager was his mother for the defence of Christendom against the Turks, that she wished her boy to be called Constantine, as an omen that he would drive back the overwhelming invasion of the infidel, and recover the fallen Empire of the East. But her wishes were overruled by her husband, who seven years before had narrowly escaped capture by his foes in the county of Cilly, and had then ascribed his safety to a dream in which St. Maximilian[1] warned him of his danger. In gratitude to his saintly patron, the Emperor could not do less than give his son the name of Maximilian.

If we are to believe tradition, the future greatness of the new-born babe was foretold by signs in the heavens; a fiery comet "such as is wont to herald the coming of a mighty prince, a sign of the future reign and the wonderful achievements of the child." All this and much more is fully set forth in that marvellous book, the "Weisskünig," written in after years under the direction of the hero himself. He was born in a time of trouble and strife, with warfare going on all around him in his childhood, for the Emperor was quite unable to keep his unruly vassals in order. His most serious foe was his brother

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[1] Saints Bonosus and Maximilian, martyred in A.D. 360.

Albert of Austria, who, with help of the insurgent citizens, besieged the imperial family in the citadel of Vienna when Maximilian was barely three years old, and they were only rescued by the generous help of Frederick's rival and former enemy, George Podiebrad, King of Bohemia, who acted as a peacemaker between the two brothers.

The death of Albert in 1463 left the Emperor in supreme possession of Austria, and the feudal lands dependent upon it. But he never overcame his prejudice against the citizens of Vienna, which was well justified by their insurrection some years later when, a second time, they besieged their ruler in the Castle of their city. The small garrison was reduced to such straits that they were very near starvation, and the boy Maximilian is said to have wandered through the vaults of the citadel, imploring the servants to give him a piece of bread. A young student at the University happened to hear of the privation which the prince endured and managed to send him some partridges shot in the neighbourhood. This was such a treat after the coarse food which he shared with his parents, that Maximilian never forgot the kindly gift, and his gratitude brought great good fortune to the giver in later days.

If it was a time of trial to all the family, it must have been especially so to the young Empress, Eleonora. She had indeed shared the full bitterness of the fate which too often befell a marriageable princess in those days. Sent away from her sunny southern home in the fair land of Portugal, bidding farewell to her young sisters, to her friends, to the gay Court of her brother King Affonso, of whose gallant and bright intelligence she possessed a full share—she found herself married, by no choice of her own, to a dull, obstinate man, more than twice her age, who had no tastes in common with her. At the very time of her grand wedding in Rome she had seen him, with timid superstition, abase himself before the Pope, and in order to ensure his coronation he had weakly signed that "Concordat" by which he renounced most of his ecclesiastical rights in favour of the Holy See. By this deed, amongst other sacrifices, Frederick agreed that the election of Bishops should depend on the confirmation of the Pope, who had the *privilege of choosing a better candidate*! All canonries and benefices falling vacant "during the six uneven months" were also yielded to the Pontiff.

But even this was not the worst, for Eleonora, who had so warmly adopted the heroic views of the Bishop of Siena on the Eastern question, could not awaken one spark of crusading zeal in the cautious mind of the Emperor. With her clear insight she could not fail to know that he was a failure even in his own special business of governing a great Empire, and we cannot wonder that in a moment of bitterness she should have exclaimed to her son, the heir of so much wasted authority:

"Could I think you capable of acting like your father, I should lament your being destined to the throne."

The boy Maximilian no doubt inherited from his mother all his finest and most attractive qualities: his eager gallant spirit, his marvellous and unfailing courtesy which won all hearts, his gay good temper, and his literary and artistic talents. He was a dreamer of splendid dreams which might have come true, but for a fatal slowness and indecision in action, which was a part of the birthright he owed to his father, and, on various critical occasions of his life, it is curious to see how exactly he follows in the steps of the Emperor Frederick, to the dismay of his followers and his own undoing.

The child was a born soldier and hunter; an example of the proverb, "Bon chien chasse de race." From his earliest years, with the din of battle and strife around him, he had a passion for every kind of weapon and armour; he trained his boy companions in regular drill and all the war manœuvres he could think of; he made them practise archery until they became so expert that with their little arrows, "à la serpentine," they could hit the goal, a mark on a door or a slit in a wall. They fought mimic battles in courtyard and hall until they must have made life intolerable to all peaceful retainers, while they attacked and defended each point of vantage, and hard blows were given on either side. Some toy soldiers still preserved in the Museum of Vienna are a quaint memorial of Maximilian's childish devotion to the art of war.

His ancestors' love of hunting was a ruling passion with the boy, whose hounds carried on a wild chase of every living animal within his father's Castle walls and their surroundings. Of these tastes we shall have occasion to speak hereafter when the youth grew up to be a splendid horseman and an unrivalled hunter; fearless and adventurous in courting every risk and danger, alike in pursuit of the wolf and the wild boar, or the perilous chase of the chamois on the mountain height. With a boy of this disposition we cannot wonder that his first tutor found him difficult to manage and was encouraged by the Emperor to use strong measures to enforce his pupil's submission. Looking back on his early education, Maximilian complained bitterly of the incompetence of his teacher, Peter Engelbrecht. "If Peter my teacher still lived," he would say, "I would make him live near me, in order to teach him how children should be brought up." He also makes the definite complaint that he was compelled to study Latin and dialectics, and not allowed to read history which he loved. In any case his father was satisfied, and rewarded Peter Engelbrecht with a fat bishopric, that of Wiener Neustadt, where Maximilian's childhood had been mostly spent. He was unfortunate in losing his mother, to whom he was passionately attached, in 1477, when he was only eight years old, and her loving guidance and sympathy was but ill replaced by the weak and careless rule of his father, with whom he had no tastes in common.

If the young prince's literary faculties were somewhat late in developing, we must give him credit later for extraordinary mental activity, wide interests, and an amount of proficiency in art, languages, and science far beyond any of his contemporaries. Not only had he a keen love for tilt, tourney, and feats of arms, being skilled in all knightly exercises, but he was thoroughly instructed in the art of war and in the prevailing theories of statesmanship and government. In one of the many books which were produced under his direction and supervision, the "Weisskünig," a most interesting light is thrown upon his early life, for if his exploits are described in too flattering a manner, at least we see the variety of his early training, and the accomplishments which he acquired. He learnt the technical details of such trades as carpentry and founding, to prepare him for understanding all that was known of gunnery and the art of attack and defence, while he had few equals as a blacksmith, and became a proficient in veterinary surgery.

The "Weisskünig" appears to have been taken down in part from the dictation of Maximilian to his secretaries, and it was afterwards rearranged and compiled by Marx Treitzsauerwein of Innsbruck. It is divided into three parts, the first describing the life of the old Weisskünig, Frederick III, his journey to meet his bride the Princess of Portugal, his marriage and his coronation at Rome. The second part of this book deals with the youth and education of the young Weisskünig,[1] Maximilian. Even if we treat it as a prose romance, we see clearly the prince's love of minute information, and his evident knowledge of his subjects, as well as his complacent conviction of his own surpassing excellence in almost every art and science.

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[1] Sometimes translated as White King, or again as Wise King !

Thus "when the time came for him to have learned masters, he put to them questions which they were not able to answer" and yet was "full of knowledge and humility and all fine qualities." We find him making a deep study of the Holy Scriptures; next he learns the seven liberal arts in a very short time: "grammar as the basis, then logic and the five others, and in them he became unsurpassably learned, understanding more than is set forth in books, at which all learned men were beyond measure astonished." Then he studied the past history of states, of Popes and Cardinals, of Kings and princes, of counts and lords and knights down to burghers and peasants, and so mastered all knowledge and experience, and the rare virtue of moderation. "He learnt never to refuse any man anything without sufficient inquiry." After this comes an obscure chapter on the learning of astrology by the young Weisskünig, and his great proficiency in the difficult art. Incidentally, he had also become the "finest and most speedy writer in the world, and could dictate to eight secretaries at one time, that he might outdo Julius Cæsar." He learnt from his father many things concerning his public duties, so that he would never allow a letter to be sent, whether of consequence or not, without first reading it himself; and he made it a duty to sign all letters and documents with his own hand.

As to the theories concerning the art of government, in the "Weisskünig," they are quaintly divided under five heads: the Almightiness of God, the Influence of the Planets on Man's Destiny, the Reason of Man, Excessive Mildness in Administration, and

Excessive Severity in Power. The discourse of Maximilian on these subjects wins the complete approval of his father, and the admiring wonder of his biographer. With regard to his study of the arts, we are told that he heard an old wise man say that a great general and commander ought to learn drawing and painting, " but for what reason it is not fit for me to disclose in this book nor to write about it; it should be kept for Kings and Commanders." For this secret reason it was that the young Weisskünig learned " sufficiently well how to paint. . . . He also supported great artists in painting and carving, and has caused many ingenious works to be painted and carved, which will remain in this world in memory of him." This is indeed no exaggeration of the truth that in days to come the Emperor Maximilian was indeed a patron and friend to such artists as Holbein and Albrecht Dürer. With regard to his love of music we are told that the prince learned to play with success upon various stringed instruments. He loved to dwell upon the thought that King David was wont to sing "praise to God with songs and harps." He also read the history of King Alexander, who had conquered so many peoples and countries, and how he loved the songs of minstrels and the happy sound of harps. So the young Weisskünig determined to follow his example, looking upon the praise of God and the vanquishing of his enemies as his two highest duties.

As for his knowledge of languages, there can be no doubt of his wonderful proficiency; he could speak Latin, French, Italian, and Flemish fluently, and had also some knowledge of English, Spanish, and Walloon. Many hundreds of letters written by him to his daughter Marguerite and others have been preserved, and it must be owned that his French is very original and unconventional in its spelling, while his written Latin has been described as "the most perfect 'Monk's Latin' which can be found." We shall have occasion to speak more fully of the wonderful illustrations of the "Weisskünig," which form its greatest charm, at a later time, but this brief sketch will give some idea of the part which refers to the early training and mental equipment of the young prince.

The great anxiety of the Emperor Frederick with regard to his son was to secure for him an alliance which would increase the glory and wealth of the House of Hapsburg. This had ever been the ambition of each member of his dynasty; and although much had been done by conquest, still more now, and in the future, was to be gained by marriage.

Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube,
Nam quæ Mars aliis, dat tibi regnæ Venus.

As Frederick anxiously turned his thoughts towards all the Courts of Europe in succession in 1463, he saw that the newly made King of France, Louis XI, had just betrothed his baby daughter Anne to the grandson of René of Anjou, and was offering his young sister Madeleine to Gaston de Foix; there was no available match in Spain, where the Princess Isabel was already beset with suitors. But the Emperor's hopes were soon fixed upon Marie, the granddaughter of Philip Duke of Burgundy, and the only child and heiress-apparent of her father Charles Count de Charolois. She was now six years old, a suitable age for Maximilian, who was four, and if no son were born she would be a great heiress, as most of her father's vast inheritance would come to her.

The proposal was first made in a most diplomatic manner in a letter from Pope Pius II to Philip Duke of Burgundy, in the year 1463. The Pope had always maintained his early friendship with Frederick III, and he honestly thought that this alliance would help forward the peace of Europe, which would promote the great desire of his heart, the united action of all Christendom against the Turk. No very definite agreement was made, for both Duke Philip and his son were quite aware of the value of little Marie in the marriage market. Indeed she was long held out as a tempting prize to all the young princes of Europe, amongst whom we may mention Charles, Duke of Guienne (brother of Louis XI), Nicholas of Calabria, Philibert of Savoy, Charles the Dauphin of France, Maximilian of Austria, and others ; but although she was nominally betrothed to most of them at one time or other, her father had not the least intention of encumbering himself with a son-in-law.

CHAPTER III

CHARLES OF BURGUNDY AND THE EMPEROR FREDERICK III

1463—1477

Concerning the Duchy of Burgundy—Towns of the Somme—Conquest of Liège and Dinant—Charles of Burgundy marries Margaret of York—Story of Péronne—Negotiations between Charles of Burgundy and Frederick III—War of Neuss—Disastrous expedition against the Swiss of Charles the Bold, who is killed at Nancy, 1477.

WELL might the Emperor Frederick desire to make an alliance for his son with the heiress of the Duke of Burgundy, whose vast possessions made him a far more powerful prince than the Emperor himself. The actual Duchy of Burgundy, the most northerly part of the ancient kingdom of the Burgundians—including Yvonne, Côte d'Or, Nièvre, and Saône-et-Loire, had been originally given as an appanage to Philip the youngest son of John the Good, who distinguished himself at the battle of Poictiers. It was always considered a fief of the Crown of France. To this had been added one province after another, by marriage or conquest—Brabant, Luxemburg, Flanders, Hainault, Zeeland, Artois, the cities of the Netherlands, and Franche-Comté, a fief of the Empire.

The towns of the Somme were also in the possession of the Duke of Burgundy since the Treaty of Arras (1435), which gave France the option of buying them back for the ransom of 400,000 golden crowns. Louis XI succeeded in raising the money which he paid to Duke Philip, and in 1463 recovered them—Amiens, Abbeville, St. Quentin, Roye, Montdidier, Corbie, and others. Charles Count of Charolois was furious at this loss of territory, and took the first opportunity of taking his revenge. When the French nobles rebelled against their King for the "Ligue du Bien public," in 1465, Charles joined them with a large army, his old father being now completely under his control. On July 16, 1465, the battle of Montl'héry was fought—a very doubtful triumph to either side, but Louis, anxious to make peace, soon after signed the treaty of Conflans, by which he gave up to Burgundy those towns on the Somme which he had recently made such a tremendous sacrifice to buy back.

Charles at once hastened to take possession of them, to the great discontent of the inhabitants, and then advanced with his triumphant army against the men of Liège, who had dared to attack Namur and Brabant during his absence. This was perhaps the most powerful of the free and sovereign cities which had risen to wealth and importance in the Middle Ages. Nominally governed by a Prince-Bishop—a vassal of the Empire, and by sixty canons mostly of noble birth—the municipal government was yet absolutely democratic, all native-born citizens above the age of fifteen having the right of suffrage and being equally eligible to hold office.

At this time they were very unfortunate in their Bishop, Louis of Bourbon, a worthless young nephew of Duke Philip of Burgundy, who had driven the burghers nearly wild with his extortions, and when they opposed him, had actually placed the city under an interdict. We cannot wonder that the men of Liège, finding their industry ruined, and their souls and bodies in equal danger, should have risen against the Duke of Burgundy as soon as he made war on their ally the King of France.

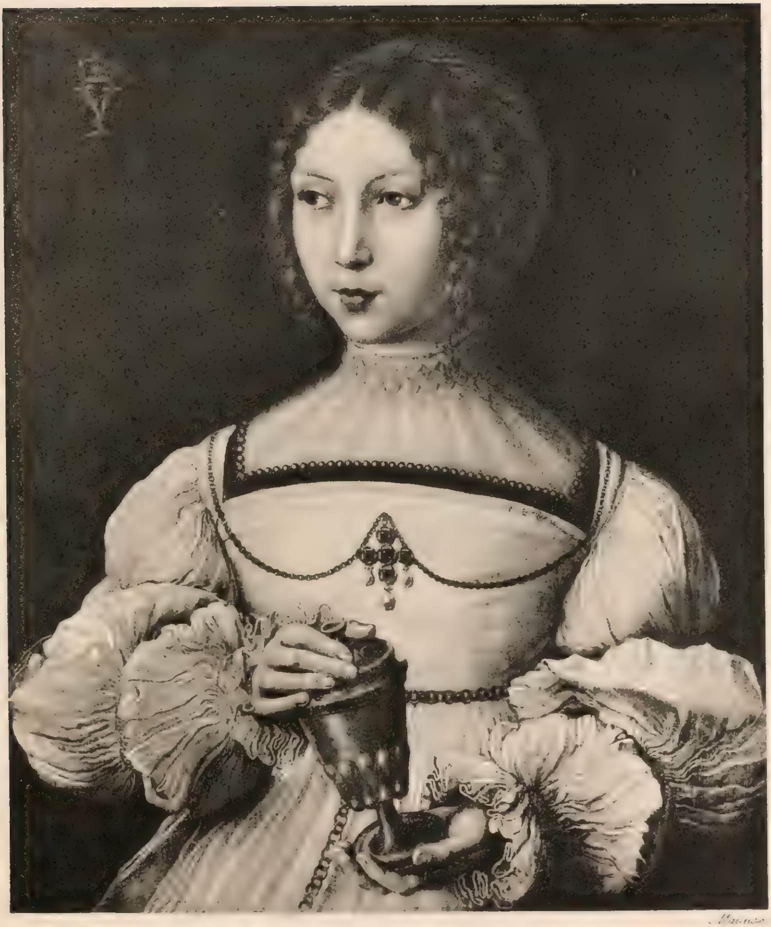
When the Count of Charolois arrived before the city, with his great army, the terror-stricken inhabitants humbled themselves before his might and were willing to agree to the most humiliating terms. It was now the month of December, too late in the year for a long siege, and the men-at-arms were behindhand in their pay, and had already outstayed their term of feudal service. It was therefore convenient for Charles to make a treaty for the present and to retire with the promise of an indemnity of 400,000 florins and other acts of submission. In the city registers this bears the title of the "Piteous Peace."

Charles returned home in triumph, to find his young daughter Marie bewailing the death of her mother, Isabelle de Bourbon. The old Duke Philip was in failing health; he had been at death's door, but he recovered sufficiently to carry out, to its bitter end, the deadly vengeance he had sworn against the city of Dinant, which had insulted his pride. The tragic fate of this free city, the ally and rival of Liège, is too terrible for words. For three days Dinant was sacked by a cruel soldiery, the men murdered or sold into slavery, the houses set on fire, and all that was not burnt in the flames was destroyed and levelled with the ground until "those who looked upon the place where it stood could say: 'cy fust Dynant!'" The only touch of humanity in this awful story is that the women and children were spared and protected, by the supreme command of Charles of Charolois.

As for his revengeful father, who had watched the awful tragedy from the hostile city of Bouvines, on the other side of the Meuse, he was carried home in his horse-litter to Bruges, where he devoted himself to religion and lingered on till the following June. After his death the title of "the Good" was awarded to him, but perhaps no man could have deserved it less. At his stately midnight funeral in the Church of St. Donatus, 1,600 torches were borne in procession, and the heralds broke their bâtons as they proclaimed his son Charles—Duke of Burgundy, of Brabant, of Limbourg and of Luxemburg, Count of Flanders, of Artois, of Franche-Comté, of Hainault, of Holland, of Zeeland, of Namur; Lord of Friesland, of Malines . . . of the cities of the Somme and others, and Marquis of the Holy Roman Empire.

This was the splendid potentate whose daughter Marie was one day to be the bride of Maximilian, and to bring him as a dowry a great part of these vast possessions. It will therefore be necessary to give a brief account of the events which occurred between the accession of Charles, in June 1467, and his death ten years later.

There was something about the overweening arro-



Isabelle de Bourgogne.

By kind permission of Monsieur Ch. Leon Cardon.

gance of these Dukes of Burgundy which the free citizens of the prosperous merchant cities could not endure. When Charles made his "joyeuse entrée" in state to receive the homage of Flanders in Ghent, some revellers gave voice to the popular feeling by shouting, "Down with the cueillotte!" a hated tax imposed on the inhabitants after their last rebellion. The Duke, in his anger, struck one of the mob with his bâton and a tumult followed. As he had unwisely brought his daughter and much treasure with him, his only anxiety was to escape in safety, and he listened to the grievances insolently enumerated and promised to grant all that was demanded. This success encouraged other cities to rebel, and the men of Liège rose in arms against their detested Bishop and besieged the town of Huy, in which he had taken refuge. On hearing this, Charles was furious and at once proclaimed war in the grim fashion of old, the heralds bearing in one hand a bare sword and in the other a lighted torch, as signal that the war was to be "à feu et à sang." He set forth from Louvain on October 27, 1467, besieged St. Tron and obtained a great victory over the men of Liège at Brusten. After this came surrender, and the city had to give up all its privileges, its corporation, its guilds and even its laws and customs. It was deprived of all artillery and war material, the fortifications were destroyed, and besides the immense fine still owing, an indemnity of 115,000 golden "lions" was demanded. Thus were forfeited the liberties bought with the life-blood of so many gallant ancestors, and the glory of Liège was humbled in the dust.

The following year, 1468, the long-projected marriage of Charles Duke of Burgundy with Margaret of York, sister of the English King Edward IV, was celebrated with great pomp. The princess had "shipped at Margate," accompanied by Lord Scales, eighty ladies of rank, and a gallant company of knights, and had a prosperous voyage to the Flemish port of Sluys, where she had a magnificent reception. The royal company, after a week's rest, continued their journey in barges on the canal to Damme, near Bruges, where the marriage was celebrated by the Bishop of Salisbury, assisted by the Pope's Legate. This was in preparation for the splendid entry into Bruges,[1] which took place next day, when the Lady Margaret, in a robe of cloth-of-gold and a crown of diamonds, rode by the side of the Duke through the richly decorated streets, while flocks of white doves were loosed from the triumphal arches as she passed. All the nobles came forth to meet her, the civic authorities, the prelates and clergy, all in their gala robes, surrounded by archers and heralds, while the air rang with the sound of clarions and trumpets. By the side of the Duke, at the great banquet, sat his daughter Marie, now eleven years old, to whom her English stepmother was always a devoted friend.

The truce between France and Burgundy had now come to an end, but Louis XI, anxious to obtain help against his own rebellious lords, was persuaded by treacherous counsel to travel to Péronne himself, and discuss terms in person with Charles. All lovers of

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[1] John Paston happened to be in Bruges at the time, and wrote a full account of the sumptuous entertainment.

Sir Walter Scott will remember the vivid fancy-picture of this perilous adventure in the pages of "Quentin Durward." The King of France narrowly escaped with his life, was compelled to agree to any terms, and to join in the siege and destruction of his ally, the city of Liège. It was a disgrace which Louis never forgot or forgave, as we shall see later in his behaviour to Marie, the heiress of Duke Charles.

While the young Maximilian was pursuing his studies and his sports, his father, the Emperor Frederick, was doing little to increase his influence or his prestige, excepting in so far as he steadily kept in view the hope of his son's marriage with the Burgundian heiress, and was ever making negotiations for that event. In 1468 he had sent an envoy to the Court of Charles with full power to treat on the subject, and the Emperor even offered the Duke that kingly title over his dominions which he had long desired. But it was not until the year 1474 that a meeting between the two princes to carry out this scheme was actually arranged, in the city of Trèves, as Metz had refused to surrender its keys, or admit a large company of armed men within its walls. During five long weeks Frederick III and Charles the Bold discussed terms without coming to a decision, Guelders and Lorraine being amongst the subjects of controversy.

Then a strange thing happened. Without taking leave or giving any warning, the Emperor suddenly departed, sailing away by night, secretly and swiftly, down the river Moselle. We may imagine the rage and dismay of Duke Charles, who had already prepared his regal robes, his sceptre and diadem, while the Cathedral was made ready for his coronation, with rich adorning and two thrones, one for Frederick III and the other for the expectant king. As Freeman says: "We laugh when Charles has got everything ready for his coronation and the Lord of the World suddenly decamps in the night, leaving Charles . . . to go back a mere duke as he came." Was this merely an instance of the extraordinary attack of doubt and vacillation which, more than once, was to ruin the prospects of his son Maximilian, or, with the recent memory of Péronne, had the Emperor's suspicions been awakened ?

We shall never know, but in any case the consequences of this rash, uncourteous flight were most serious. Commines quaintly remarks that "interviews between great princes are a grievous mistake and great evils follow from them"; also, as he points out, there soon followed the war of Neuss,[1] one of the Hansa towns, besieged by Charles of Burgundy in July 1474. The beleaguered fortress stood on a solitary height above the marshy plain from which the Rhine had receded ; it was well fortified and so gallantly defended that it held out against the investment and fierce bombardment of an overwhelming army, during eleven long months of assaults and sorties.

Frederick III held a Diet at Felsburg in October to consider means of helping the brave city, but it was not until the winter had passed away that a great host of feudal vassals, princes, counts, and archbishops —such as had not been gathered to the support of the Empire for 200 years—set forth to follow their lord to the defence of Neuss. Yet it was not until May that the welcome message reached the well-nigh despairing garrison, "Neuss, be of good comfort: thou art saved." After a sudden and fierce attack upon the relieving force, Charles was compelled to raise the siege and make peace with the Emperor.

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[1] A fortified city of Dusseldorf.

When his vassals had urged him first to declare forfeit all the lordships of Burgundy in the Empire, Commines tells us that Frederick, "who being old had seen much," made answer to the suggestion by telling the old fable of the hunters who sold the bear-skin before killing their bear. Moreover the wise old man still cherished that marriage project for his son, and indeed obtained in January 1476 a definite promise from the Duke that his daughter Marie should marry Maximilian.

This was just as Charles was setting forth on his disastrous campaign against the Swiss. After the defeat of Granson, when the Burgundian men-at-arms fled in sudden panic in spite of the Duke's heroic efforts to rally them, and the magnificent treasures in his camp fell a prey to the foe, Charles gave serious thought to the future of his only child, and on May 6, 1476, the betrothal of Maximilian and Marie was formally announced. But the heart of Charles of Burgundy was set upon revenge against those men of Bern who had led their victorious compatriots against him. He had once more raised a powerful army and, full of reckless confidence, advanced from Lausanne by way of Morat. "All Europe was prepared to watch with breathless interest the great drama on which so much depended. The Emperor was full of hope, the King of Hungary of fear, whatever might chance. Edward IV had sent his brother-in-law Rivers to be on the spot; Yolande of Savoy at Gex had constant prayers and processions, while the Duke of Milan kept relays of couriers from his palace to the Burgundian camp; and Louis XI, the most interested of all, awaited the event at Lyons."[1]

Morat is well placed on the eastern bank of the lake of that name, so that help could arrive from the other cantons, and the men of Zurich in particular showed heroic courage and endurance. The town was besieged on June 8, and an attempt to take it by assault was repelled with great loss. The final battle took place on June 22 in drenching rain, when the Swiss attacked with steady impetuous courage, and against their serried ranks of spears, the squadrons of Burgundy hurled themselves in vain. The struggle was long and terrible, and the fighting lasted from noon until the close of the long summer day; and two-thirds of the splendid army of Duke Charles fell in battle, or were drowned in the waters of the lake. He fought with desperate courage, and escaped with his life to the castle of La Rivière, near Pontarlier, where he remained for two months in gloomy despair. But his soul was unconquered, for on hearing that Nancy was attacked by René of Lorraine, he hastened to the rescue, only to learn that the beleaguered city had already fallen.

It was not until the "Vigil of the Kings," Sunday, January 5, 1477, that the last act in this tragic drama took place. A great army was approaching the walls of Nancy, under command of the young Duke of Lorraine, and Charles, fiercely putting aside the counsel of his faithful vassals, resolved to go forth and meet the foe. The réveillé sounded before daybreak, and as the doomed prince fastened his helmet, the golden lion of Flanders on the crest fell to the ground. "Hoc est signum Dei," he is reported to have said.

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[1] "Life of Louis XI." Christopher Hare.

In the fateful battle which followed, the overwhelming numbers and magnificent valour of the Swiss levies carried all before them. Yet ever in the thick of the fight, the mighty Duke on his black horse charged with desperate courage, and was amongst the last to fall on that fatal field. His end was shrouded in mystery, and it was long before his subjects would believe in his death: "Surely their splendid lord was but biding his time, and would come again to shine forth in his greatness and glory!"

CHAPTER IV

MAXIMILIAN AND HIS WIFE, MARIE OF BURGUNDY

1477—1482

Critical position of Marie of Burgundy—She appeals to Maximilian, her betrothed—He arrives in Ghent—His marriage with Marie, the heiress of the vast lands of Burgundy—Birth of a son, Philippe—War with France—Battle of the Spurs—Valour of Maximilian—Birth of a daughter, Marguerite—Capture of Otranto by the Turks—1480—*Proposed crusade—Maximilian trains the army of the Netherlands—Death of Marie of Burgundy*—1482.

WE have now reached a most critical period in the life of Maximilian, when it seems almost by a stroke of chance that he was wafted on the full tide of fortune. The great Duke of Burgundy had fallen—his last duty unfulfilled—for Marie, his sole heiress, was still an unprotected girl, exposed to the unchartered claims of any ambitious suitor who might win her by right of conquest. In that hour of disaster, even her betrothal to Maximilian by no means assured him the prize for which his father had laboured so long and so assiduously, for the final catastrophe found the bridegroom quite unprepared to play the part of a chivalrous knight and rescue his lady in distress.

Never was help more needed, for the position of the Princess Marie was indeed most pitiful. She was at the mercy of her rebellious subjects, the burghers of Ghent, who had already extorted from her the "Great Privilege,"[1] refused with the other chief cities to pay taxes, and, in spite of her tears and entreaties, had actually put to death two of her most trusted counsellors. Deprived of her friends, beset by danger on every side, for Louis XI was pressing her to marry his son Charles, a boy of five, she managed, although closely watched and kept in a kind of imprisonment, to send a touching letter of appeal to the Archduke Maximilian.

"Most dear and friendly lord and brother, from my heart I greet you. . . . You must not doubt that I will agree to the treaty made between us by my lord and father, now in glory, and will be a true wife to you . . . for I may not doubt you. The bearer knows how I am hemmed in, though I cannot open my mind to him . . . may God grant us our hearts' desire. I pray you not to linger, as your coming will bring help and comfort to my lands . . . but if you come not, my lands can look for no aid . . . and I may be driven to do that which I would not, by force against my will, if you forsake me."

It is difficult to understand the long delay before the princely lover was able to obey this urgent summons. Perhaps the fullest explanation is given by Maximilian himself in those quaint chronicles, the "Weisskünig" and "Teuerdank," the prose epics of his life, which he dictated in later years to his secretary. It is most interesting to notice how lovingly he dwells upon the slightest details of this eventful time, richly embroidering the memories of the past in his imagination. We have a very full account of that "mighty warrior," Charles of Burgundy, the "King of the Flaming Iron," so called from the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece, instituted by the father of Charles the Bold. This chain or collar is composed "of double steels, interwoven with flint stones emitting sparks of fire." We learn how the news came that the King of the Flaming Iron was killed in battle, and the "two Queens" heard it with grief and heart-rending lamentation. "The old Queen was Margaret of York, sister of Edward IV, the third wife of Duke Charles, and the young Queen was Marie his daughter." When her letter reached Maximilian, he consulted his father, who considered the matter and pointed out "firstly, the honour of the marriage; secondly, the usefulness of the possessions; thirdly, the care he should take to obtain all this. . . ." Thereupon the young Weisskünig replied: "My father, nothing is better than real honour, and nothing more pleasing to God than to live in His commandments. . . ." Therefore he decided to go and marry the princess, the "noble queen of honours."

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[1] Which revoked the authority of Charles the Bold, and gave the people the right of self-government.

But the old Weisskünig, the Emperor Frederick, remarked that he had a war upon his hands against the "Green King" (Matthias, King of Hungary), and added: "I will give you for some time my army, that you may learn to make war, so that if you come to the government of the queen's country you may know how to deal with your enemies." This "the son accepted very gladly. . . ." Then follows a full account of that educational war, which may have taught Maximilian something, yet it scarcely seems an appropriate time when his promised bride was in such terrible need of immediate help. No doubt there were money difficulties as well, as was the usual case with the Hapsburg family, but the fact remains that it was not until May 21, that the bridegroom-elect actually started from Vienna, with a magnificent suite in attendance upon him, "many archbishops, bishops, and princes, with a great number of knights." Even then, a long halt was made at Cologne, and Commines explains that Maximilian waited there to receive money from Marie to continue the journey. However this may be, it was not until August 18 that the Archduke and his noble company of lords and gentlemen reached Ghent.

It is very curious to notice in the "Teuerdank" that Maximilian himself is quite conscious that his laggard behaviour with regard to the rescue of his bride requires much explanation and apology. In this allegorical story, which was first privately printed on parchment in 1517, only two years before the death of Maximilian, he relates how, after the death of the fabulously wealthy "King Romreich" (Charles of Burgundy), his only daughter, the "Princess Ehrenreich" (Marie), sees from her father's will that only the "Ritter Teuerdank" (Maximilian) is worthy to marry her. She summons him to her help, as she is beset with troubles, and he sets forth to meet her with his trusty comrade Erenhold. But the devil has a spite against the young prince and leads him astray with the most fabulous adventures, while his enemies also send against him three captains of evil, who do all they can to lure him on to destruction. The name of the first is "Fürwittig," who personifies the vain ambition of youth to glory in its own might and cleverness; the second is "Unfalo," who represents youth's wild passion for adventure and travel by land and sea; and the most dangerous of all is "Neidelhard," the emblem of jealousy, who ensnares Teuerdank into the blackest perils. Of course the gallant young Prince emerges unharmed from the ordeal, through his own virtue and the magic power of love. But even yet another test awaits him, for he has to lead a crusade against the infidels who at once become his faithful vassals. Then at last, resplendent with honour and glory, he arrives at the court of the Princess Ehrenreich and his marriage takes place with due magnificence.

As we follow the history of Maximilian, we shall see how extremely characteristic of him is this extravagant romance, for all through his eventful life he was quite happy in the untroubled confidence that he could do no wrong. We shall have occasion later to refer to these and other literary works of our hero, which are chiefly valuable for their splendid illustrations by Hans Burgkmair and other famous designers.

We have a striking account, from an eye-witness, of the young Archduke's triumphal entry into Ghent on that August day of 1477, like some chivalrous paladin of old story. "Gallantly riding a mighty chestnut horse, clad in silver armour with uncovered head, his bright flowing locks bound with a diadem of pearls and precious stones, Maximilian appeared so glorious in his young majesty, so strong in his manliness that I knew not which to admire most, the beauty of his youth, the brave show of his manhood, or the rich promise for the future. He was a joy to behold, that splendid man!"[1]

"The day after the arrival of the young White King, his marriage with the Queen of the Flaming Iron was carried out with great pomp in the Cathedral, at six o'clock in the morning, in the presence of a splendid company, the Bishop of Tornach at the altar, supported by the Papal Legate, while the young Charles of Guelders and his sister bore the tapers before the bride. She was sumptuously clad in gold-embroidered damask and a golden girdle set with jewels round her waist, a cloak of ermine on her shoulders and the magnificent crown of Burgundy, one blaze of gems, on her head. "After the Te Deum Laudamus was sung with loud musical accompaniments, they left the church in royal order for the wedding feast—where there was much music, fine singing, and wonderful joy. . . ." After describing the great festivities which followed, the "Weisskünig" continues: "I will now number the mightiest countries the Queen possessed and which the young White King took under his sway; viz. the two countries, Upper and Lower Burgundy, Luxemburg and Tischy; the three countries, Brabant, Lorraine, and Guelderland; the five countries, Hainault, Holland, Zeeland, Flanders, and Artois; the six countries, Picardy, Friesland, Zutphen, Namur, Salines, and Malines; besides many other countries, dominions, towns, and castles, more than I can here number or name. . . ."

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[1] Letter of Wilhelm v. Hoverde, dated August 23, 1477. See Janssen, i. 592.

A goodly heritage indeed; but this was no light burden for a youth of eighteen, and Maximilian had much trouble in store. But from the beginning the marriage seems to have been a very happy one, and their mutual affection never failed. In a confidential letter to his friend Sigismund Prüschenk, Maximilian writes four months later, December 7, 1477:

"I have a lovely, good, and virtuous wife who fills me with content, for which I give thanks to God. She is tall but slender of body, much smaller than 'die Rosina,'[1] and snow-white. She has brown hair, a small nose, a little head and face, her eyes brown, tinged with grey, beautiful and clear. The mouth is somewhat high, but well-defined and red. . . . My wife is a thorough sportswoman with hawk and hound. She has a greyhound that is very swift. It sleeps generally all night in our room. . . ."[2]

Marie on her side was devoted to her husband, and she left all affairs of State and policy entirely in his hands. As we have seen, the burghers of the Netherland cities were masterful and resolute in asserting their rights, for the Princess had been compelled to grant the charter of freedom to the men of Ghent on February 10, and when she had made the "joyeuse entrée" on May 20, at Louvain, as Duchess of Brabant, she had granted new privileges to the citizens, and greatly lessened the ducal power. If the rebellious citizens could behave thus to their own Duchess, they were not likely to show much respect for the Austrian youth who now sought to govern them. The life-long struggle between Maximilian and his turbulent subjects in Flanders began almost on his wedding-day, for they put every difficulty in his way, although it was absolutely necessary for him to raise men and money to repel the formidable attacks of France. The Duchy of Guelders had also revolted, and there was trouble on every side.

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[1] See Von Kraus, p. 30. A young girl from whom Maximilian had a tearful parting.

[2] Von Kraus, p. 27.

After the death of Charles of Burgundy, Louis XI had lost no time in seizing the Duchy of (Lower) Burgundy, the most northerly part of the ancient Burgundian kingdom, always a fief of the Crown of France. He had also annexed Picardy and Franche-Comté. But he appears to have been impressed with the energy of the young Archduke, for he made a truce with him in September 1477, and promised to restore the towns of Hainault. Meantime Maximilian, while yielding to the city fathers of Ghent in the management of his household, had found scope for his martial instincts in organising the army of Flanders, training the men with ceaseless energy and skill until he had aroused the national enthusiasm to such an extent that five hundred young nobles were willing to serve under him on foot.

There does not appear to have been any event of importance before the Duchess Marie gave birth to her son at Bruges, on June 22, 1478 ; an occasion of great rejoicing. The infant prince received the name of Philippe from his Burgundian grandfather, and was held at the font by Margaret of York, the widow of Duke Charles, who had always been a warm friend of Marie. She raised the child in her arms before the assembled people, with the words: "My children, behold your young lord, Philippe of the blood of the Emperor of the Romans." She also gave him a collar of rubies, while the Sire de Ravenstein offered a superb sword of gold, and M. de St. Pol added, as another suitable christening present, a helmet decorated with pearls and precious stones. The birth of his heir was a supreme joy to Maximilian, as it ensured the Hapsburg succession combined with the great possessions of Burgundy.

Meantime there were many dangers before the young Archduke, for although there was still a temporary truce with France, Louis XI was making steady preparations for the renewal of the war. He had ordered new and improved cannon to be made, and was strengthening his alliance with the Swiss League, and engaging a large force of mercenaries from them. The Emperor Frederick, who was unable to help his son with soldiers or money, tried what diplomacy would do, and wrote long letters to Louis XI, urging him to restore the lands of Burgundy which he had taken. To this appeal the French King replied in learned Latin epistles, pointing out that his dispute with Maximilian had no connection with the Empire, and expressing his surprise that at this critical moment for Christianity, the nations of Europe should not combine against the Turks instead of making war with each other.

Louis wrote in the same strain to Pope Sixtus IV, and threatened a General Council when his friends in Italy were attacked ; he was at peace with England and concluded a treaty with Ferdinand and Isabel of Spain on October 9, 1478, thus making ready for the coming struggle with Maximilian, who was technically the first to break the truce, by retaking Cambray. The national army which he had so well trained, now stood the young Prince in good service, for in the campaign which followed, he won his first victory over the French in pitched battle, near the village of Guinegaste, about a league south of the fortress of Thérouanne, which he was on his way to besiege. The French general, Philippe de Crèvecœur, trusting to his cavalry, had charged a small body of the enemy's horsemen, who broke before their attack and were hotly pursued. Meanwhile the French "franc-archers" attacked the Flemish pikemen, gallantly led by Maximilian, who sprang from his horse and rushed into the midst of their ranks when they were driven back, shouting to his nobles to follow. There was a splendid rally, which turned the fortune of the day ; for when Crèvecœur and his men-at-arms returned from their rash pursuit, it was to find their infantry scattered and the enemy in possession of the field. So great was the flight of the French army that the encounter has often been called the "Battle of the Spurs," although the French object to this name, as they were told not "to give battle."

The contest had lasted for six hours, and 7,000 men are said to have been left upon the field, yet, as Sismondi remarks, "it was in fact indecisive and useless to the apparent victor."

When Maximilian returned to Ghent, he had a triumphal entry, for he was met at the city gate by his wife and infant son, and greeted by the hearty welcome of the citizens as he rode home through the streets with his boy in his arms. For the moment he was the popular hero, but he was unable to make any practical use of his success, which was followed soon after by the disastrous capture of the Flemish herring-fleet, which supplied most of Europe with salt fish. This was a fortunate exploit for the French navy, to which Louis XI had devoted much care and interest. He had also greatly improved his army by replacing the "free-archers" with a new body of heavily armed infantry, raised by taxes on the various cities of France, which now had to contribute money instead of men. To the foresight and talent of this King, his successors were indebted for their victories on the Continent.

At the beginning of the following year, on January 10, 1480, there was born to the Duchess Marie, at Brussels, a daughter who received the name of Marguerite. Her baptism took place in the ancient cathedral of Sainte Gudule, her sponsors being the Prince of Orange, Philip of Cleves, Lord of Ravenstein, and Margaret of York, the widow of Charles of Burgundy. This lady had a warm affection for her step-daughter, and always remained a devoted friend of her two children. It was probably through her influence that, some months later, a marriage contract was concluded between her niece the Princess Anne, daughter of Edward IV, and the infant prince Philippe. But this was one of those many proposed alliances which were never carried out. The Duchess Margaret usually resided in her dower palace at Malines, where she had large estates, having completely adopted the country of her married life.

The most important event of the year 1480 was the capture of Otranto by the Turks, which filled all Christendom with dismay. Pope Sixtus IV endeavoured to make peace amongst the sovereigns of Europe in order that they might combine against the common foe, and for this purpose, he sent his nephew Giuliano della Rovere (later Julius II), as Papal Legate to prolong the truce between Maximilian and Louis XI. This was in fact renewed until April 1481, and was proclaimed in Paris by sound of trumpet. But there was never any lasting peace between these two princes, whose character and policy were so different. Throughout all his life Maximilian remained an impulsive dreamer, while Louis XI was ever the man of action and keen practical wisdom, not to be deterred from his course by any tender-hearted scruples. When the French King had an alarming attack of apoplexy at Chinon in March 1481, the young Archduke of Austria had every reason to hope that his enemy would not long be a menace to his dominions. But the first stroke of Death was destined to fall in his own home, and to plunge him into the lowest depths of sorrow and disaster.

In September of this year, the Duchess Marie had given birth to another son, who lived but a few days. However, the young wife was not long in recovering her health and spirits, and during the winter which followed, she was able to enjoy her favourite hunting, to which she was as passionately devoted as Maximilian himself. Early in the spring of 1482, on a bright March morning, the princely pair rode forth with a gay company, from their palace at Bruges, for a hawking expedition in the low-lying marshy swamps of the meadows which girdle the city. Here the herons are wont to congregate on the sedgy banks of the canals, and there was every prospect of excellent sport. Marie, full of eagerness as she led the way, for her falcon had just struck a heron, put her horse at a dyke, but he missed his footing, stumbled and fell, throwing his rider heavily to the ground. With no thought of herself, her only desire being not to alarm her husband, the Duchess made light of the accident, and it is doubtful if she received proper medical care in time; but in any case, the injury proved fatal. Within less than three weeks, the great heiress of Burgundy and its vast dominions—tenderly loved wife and happy mother—was to pass away, to the terrible grief of the bereaved Maximilian. Overwhelmed with despair, he had lost all self-control in her sick-chamber, and broke down with such heart-rending sobs, that poor Marie herself had to implore him to leave the room and compose himself, before she received the chief lords of the Netherlands and the Knights of the Golden Fleece, whom she had summoned to take their oath of allegiance to him as regent for his infant son Philippe.

We have a most pathetic story from the old chronicle, of the wonderful calmness and courage with which the beloved young princess, thus suddenly cut off in her brilliant prime, rallied her strength to do all that was needful for the sake of the loved ones she left behind. Around her deathbed there were tears and lamentations; the Bishop of Tournay could scarcely control his voice to speak his pious exhortation. The dying woman alone remained serene and brave as she breathed her last farewells. Her first thought was for her husband, and she thus ends her loving words to him, "Nous serons, hélas! bientôt séparés!" Then turning to her children, "Adieu, Philippe mon jeune fils, vous serez sous peu orphelin! . . . Adieu, Marguerite ma fille. Vous perdez votre mère avant le temps, mais je dois subir mon sort. . . ."

Then she takes leave of the lords and knights who had been her faithful and loyal friends, going through that roll-call of noble names, "Adieu, chevaliers. Adieu, Marguerite d'Yorck. Adieu, Dame de Ravenstein, gardienne et protectrice de mes enfants; gardez les selon mes désirs, . . ." ending with the touching appeal: "Messeigneurs, la mort est près de moi; pardonnez moi si j'ai jamais pû vous causer quelque déplaisir."

Thus Marie the beloved passed away, leaving sorrow and desolation behind her, after less than four brief years of happy married life. Maximilian felt her death most bitterly, and never hereafter could he speak or hear her name without emotion. His grief was shared by all who knew the gentle Duchess, and she was mourned even by her turbulent subjects. There is a curious contemporary manuscript in the Library of Boulogne, which speaks warmly in her praise and then almost rises to poetry in allusion to her dear name. "Marie is the name spoken by angels, and so much honoured that nothing can equal it. . . . The soul that meditates on it is sanctified, the voice that utters it is clarified, the person who hears it is fortunate, and she who bears it is assured of all that is most sweet and sanctified. . . ."[1]

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[1] Histoire abrégée du Pays et Comté d'Artois, par François Baulduon, Jurisconsulte natif de la Ville d'Arras.

CHAPTER V

TROUBLES OF MAXIMILIAN IN FLANDERS

1482—1486

Troubles of Maximilian in Flanders—Rebellion of the burghers—They make peace with France—Marguerite betrothed to the Dauphin and sent to France—Educated by Anne de Beaujeu—Frederick III at war with Hungary—Maximilian elected King of the Romans, 1486*—Passing of the old order and coming of the Renaissance—A time of change.*

THE loss of his beloved wife was not only a heartfelt grief to Maximilian, but, from a political point of view, it threatened to be a serious disaster. According to the declaration made at the time of his marriage, the authority of the Austrian Archduke in the Netherlands would end on the death of Marie, and his only claim to rule them, would be as Regent for the heir, his son Philippe, who was not yet five years old. But the boy and his younger sister Marguerite were both in the power of the men of Ghent, who held them as hostages until they could carry out their own plans. Throughout Flanders there was no feeling of loyalty towards this foreign prince who had married their Duchess, but who was not strong enough to help them against the encroachments of France which threatened their trade and industry. Commercial success was the one thing these burghers cared for, and they felt that their only chance was peace with France. The Emperor was too much engaged with his hopeless struggle against Matthias Corvinus of Hungary to yield any help, and Edward of England was in too critical a position himself to come forward as an ally. Thus it was that Flanders and Brabant took the law into their own hands, and refused to acknowledge Maximilian as Regent of his son (mambourg) except under the control of a Council of their own selection. His authority was only accepted in Hainault, Holland, and Zeeland.

Meantime there was disturbance and disorder on every side. The Bishop of Liège had been brutally murdered by William de la Marck, who, supported by France, gave the bishopric to his own son and defied all authority during a shameful rule of three years, when he was defeated by Maximilian and paid the penalty of his misdeeds at Maestricht. Faction was raging at Utrecht, many towns of Holland were pillaged, and Haarlem was only saved by the payment of a heavy fine to the rebels. The young Archduke found himself quite powerless to assert his authority, with his children practically prisoners in the hands of his turbulent subjects, and he could not prevent them from opening a formal negotiation with Louis, with whom they had long been carrying on secret intrigues. The Council of four, with Ravenstein at its head, which had been appointed to govern Flanders on behalf of the boy Philippe, entirely ignored Maximilian, and met at Alost to carry out their own purpose of an alliance with France, which would assure their own commercial interests. They were ready to sacrifice all political considerations for their own advantage and were ready to agree to anything.

Louis XI had been quite astute enough to foresee this, and he remarked to Commines that he knew how much those men of Ghent were inclined to rebellion and turbulence against the House of Burgundy. "They seem to me to have found their hour, for the two children are in their hands, the Archduke is very young, his father is still living, there is war on every side, and besides he is a foreigner without a strong force of his own."

The French King was justified by the event, and he took advantage of this opportune moment to conclude a most advantageous treaty with the arrogant plebeians of Ghent. The "Peace of Arras," arranged for December 1482, consented to the marriage of the baby Marguerite with the Dauphin Charles; she was to be educated in France and to bring as her dowry Artois and Franche-Comté. Prince Philippe, now the heir, was to do homage to Louis XI for Flanders, a long-contested point, against which his grandfather Charles of Burgundy had fought with such desperate determination. As for Maximilian, he was not even consulted in the matter, or suffered to have a voice in the Council; but he was forced to consent and to sign the Treaty in March 1483, under penalty of losing his whole income from the States. Wounded alike in his pride and his affection, the young father saw his little daughter handed over to the care of his foreign enemy, while his four-year-old son Philippe, the heir of the vast possessions of Burgundy, remained in the guardianship of the men of Ghent. As his friend Olivier de la Marche described the situation: "Monsieur l'Archiduc, noste prince, ressemble à Saint Eustace, à qui un loup ravit son fils et un lyon sa fille."

In the Treaty of Arras Louis XI had indeed been successful beyond all his expectations. The "Lords of Ghent," as he called these arrogant plebeians, who were led by one Coppenole, a shoemaker by trade had calmly granted as the dowry of the little princess, not only Artois and Franche-Comté, but the lands of Auxerrois, Mâconnais, and Charolois, over none of which had they the slightest legal control. It only remained for the French King to take immediate possession of them. The Treaty also proclaimed that Marguerite, a child of three, was to be at once sent to Arras, and there given into the hands of the French Commissioners.

Maximilian, her father, had no voice in the matter, but was compelled to yield, and we may imagine his indignation when his daughter was escorted by a company of burghers across the frontier and delivered over by her mother's friend, Madame de Ravenstein, to the Lords of Crèvecœur, of Beaujeu and of Albret; to be placed in the guardianship of the Lady Anne de Beaujeu, the King's daughter. We are thankful to know that the young child was allowed to keep her nurse, whose husband, Le Veau de Bousanton, accompanied her with the post of "maître d'hôtel."

A long and weary journey awaited Marguerite before she passed through Paris, where she was honourably received, and at length brought in safety to the banks of the Loire. The Dauphin Charles met her near Amboise at the village of Metairie le Rayne, where a ceremony of betrothal was gone through, and the "marriage," as Commines always calls it, was celebrated with the utmost pomp and ceremony a little later. There was present a stately and imposing company; ambassadors of Austria, with deputies of the Flemish cities, one of whom wrote a full account of the wedding. We are told how the Dauphin set forth with a suite of great French lords, preceded by clarions and trumpets, and how he waited outside until the arrival of the bride, carried in the arms of Madame de Sègre, who was supported on either side by Madame Anne de Beaujeu and Madame l'Admirale. The oration after the marriage service was pronounced by the Abbé de Saint Bertin, who compared the bride and bridegroom to Queen Esther and King Ahasuerus, and then went on to describe all the famous Marguerites of the Netherlands and the Empire.

Louis XI did not long survive this triumph of diplomacy; he died about two months later, on August 30, 1483, at Plessis-les-Tours, in the comfortable assurance that he had provided in his own way for the future of his son. His daughter Anne, married to the lord of Beaujeu, was left Regent of the kingdom—both Charles her brother, and Marguerite his infant bride, being left entirely in her charge. This was in truth a marvellous piece of good-fortune for the little princess, who was destined to receive, during her stay in France, the most kind and judicious care and at the same time an unusually excellent education. Anne de Beaujeu, wife of Pierre Duc de Bourbon, was a woman of very fine character and of splendid intellect, worthy in every respect of the high position in which she was placed by her father as Regent of the kingdom of France during the minority of her brother Charles VIII. She governed the great realm with a wise and vigorous rule, while, in her magnificent Court at Amboise, she was a generous patron of learned men and artists. To the circle of young girls, mostly of noble birth, who were brought up in her household, as was the custom of those days, she acted the part of a good mother who watched over their individual training with patient and devoted care.

In the days to come, Marguerite was to do full justice to this wise training, for she too was to be a distinguished and successful ruler and diplomatist, a patron of art and learning, while she also followed the example of the Lady of Beaujeu in her passionate love for the chase. No doubt the peaceful, refined, and well-ordered life at Amboise during those critical ten years of Marguerite's life, provided a far more suitable atmosphere than that of a Flemish city constantly disturbed by the broils of rebellious burghers.

Amongst the companions of the young Austrian princess were the delicate Susanne, heiress of Bourbon and later the wife of her impetuous cousin Charles; also Louise de Savoie, who married Charles d'Orléans, Comte d'Angoulême, and is known to fame as the mother of François I; in later days holding conference with Marguerite of Austria, as rival sovereigns, to settle the peace of Europe.

Meantime Maximilian had a difficult task before him in his endeavour to rule his turbulent subjects in Flanders, who still kept possession of his son Philippe, while his prestige had fallen so low that the Knights of the Golden Fleece, in conclave at Termonde, actually declared that his headship of the Imperial Order was at an end. But the Archduke never lost heart or courage even in this dark hour; he was successful in arms against Oudenarde, Bruges, and Ghent, which he entered in triumph on July 6, 1485, capturing the great banner of the city—and recovered his son, who was brought to him with his companions in captivity, Antoine de Bourbon and Adolphe de Ravenstein. Maximilian was solemnly proclaimed Regent (mambourg) for Philippe, who inherited the estates of his mother, Marie de Bourgogne. The boy, who was now seven years old, was then taken by his father to Malines and entrusted to the care of the Dowager Duchess of Bourgogne, Margaret of York, sister of the English King Edward IV, whose death in 1483, had been followed by the tragic end of his young sons. The battle of Bosworth, August 27, 1485, had just placed the crown of England on the head of Henry VII of Lancaster, and the Duchess Margaret, a woman of strong character and passionate feeling, pursued the family quarrel as a vendetta. She was always eager to receive any disaffected adherents of the House of York, and to help their conspiracies with money and influence; in fact so strong was her desire to injure Henry VII that she gave a warm welcome to Perkin Warbeck and others, and was called "aunt of all the pretenders."

If the position of Maximilian had somewhat improved in Flanders, he was yet in the unfortunate position of being powerless to afford adequate help to his father, the Emperor Frederick III, in the hour of his deepest need, when the Magyar King Matthias Corvinus succeeded in conquering the Duchy of Lower Austria and taking possession of the city of Vienna, which he kept until his death, in 1490. This was a great blow to the old Emperor, and in his personal loss as a Hapsburg, he does not appear to have found compensation in the election of his son Maximilian as King of the Romans and Emperor-Elect, which was carried through the Diet of 1486. Strange to say, Frederick actually opposed the elevation of his son, possibly from jealousy and being unwilling to share his authority.

Many reasons had combined to ensure the choice of Maximilian. In the first place he was the strongest of the German princes; Archduke of Austria, Count of Tyrol, Duke of Styria and Carinthia, and feudal lord of lands in Alsace, Swabia, and Switzerland. By his marriage with Marie de Bourgogne he was also ruler of Flanders and Burgundian States, the richest part of the domains of Charles the Bold. Then, too, he was recommended by his personal character, for he had already given proof of splendid courage, and had shown himself magnanimous after the conquest of Ghent, in 1485, by declaring a general amnesty to all but the ringleaders in the rebellion. Last, but not least, although the Empire was not hereditary, as son of the present sovereign, the young Archduke had a special claim to the consideration of the electors.

The Diet of the Empire (Reichstag), was an ancient and traditional Council, a purely feudal body whose origin is somewhat intricate and obscure. In the case of an imperial election, there seem to have been originally three stages. First certain princes or great lords led and decided the choice of the nation, and we find Pope Urban IV in 1263 declaring that "by immemorial custom the right of choosing the Roman King belongs to seven electors." These were the three Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier, the Count Palatine of the Rhine, the Duke of Saxony, the Margrave of Brandenburg, and the King of Bohemia, who, as a foreigner, was excluded from any share in the Council except the election of the King. These electors claimed to be the successors of the Roman Senate, and their choice practically settled the question. Their solemn and unanimous declaration was the formal "Election," the second stage in the proceedings. The third stage was reached with the approval of the other nobles and the acclamation of the multitude.

This was the process which resulted in the coronation of Maximilian on April 9, 1486, at Aachen, with the diadem of Charlemagne, by three Archbishops of Mainz, Cologne, and Trier, with great state and ancient ceremonial. He thus became heir-apparent of the Imperial Throne, which would be his a few years later, on the death of Frederick III, in 1493, and with him the Austrian monarchy may be said to begin, if the Holy Empire in its old meaning comes to an end. The accession of Maximilian I coincides with so many important developments that it may be looked upon as a landmark in history.

The old order was passing away, and the new birth, the Renaissance, had taken its rise in Italy and already crossed the Alps. Ancient custom and tradition had received a fatal blow in 1453, with the taking of Constantinople and the fall of the Eastern Empire. In the latter half of the fifteenth century, the so-called New Learning had spread far and wide ; a return to classical taste in letters, in art, and in architecture. Printing had brought the treasures of learning within reach of all, and books were no longer confined to the clergy ; the invention of gunpowder was changing the face of war, and making of no avail the chivalry of gallant knights like Bayard ; while regular drilled troops were steadily replacing the militia of feudal vassals. But perhaps the one event which brought most change to the ideas of men, was the stupendous widening of their horizon by the discovery of America, and the effect of this was heightened by the new teaching of the geographer and astronomer that their world was no firm plain with encircling ocean—the centre of the universe—but a mere globe swept round in a solar system amidst countless others. The thoughts and beliefs of men were shaken to their very foundation, and we can scarcely wonder that the long-revered scholastic philosophy of the Middle Ages was treated with ridicule, and men began to look upon the Gothic cathedrals and abbeys with the same indifference as they felt towards the mysticism and devotion of their forefathers who had raised them.

An age of splendour and luxury in every department of life had dawned when man's first desire was to gratify the taste and the senses; to make the best in every way of this present world. The result was a kind of revived Paganism utterly alien to the spirit of bygone crusaders and ascetics. It is not surprising therefore that, with other beliefs of the past ages, the shadowy greatness of the Roman Empire faded away in the stronger light of the Renaissance. Indeed henceforth we see the Holy Roman Empire passing into the German Kingdom, and as we follow the steps of Maximilian, we shall appreciate him as one of the last knights of mediæval chivalry and the first patriot King of modern days.

CHAPTER VI

WARS AGAINST BRUGES AND FRANCE

1486—1494

More troubles in Flanders—Maximilian taken prisoner by the men of Bruges—His release—The city attacked by Frederick III—Long and tedious war follows—Maximilian betrothed to Anne de Bretagne—Charles VIII marries Anne—Peace of Senlis—Marguerite sent back to Germany—Death of the Emperor Frederick III—Maximilian marries Bianca Sforza, niece of the Duke of Milan.

AFTER his coronation as "King of the Romans," Maximilian returned to the Netherlands in the summer of 1486, and went to Malines to fetch his son the Duke Philippe, in order to accompany him in a kind of royal progress through his dominions. Even the democratic burghers could not be quite unconscious of the glamour which attended the Archduke's new dignity, and he met with a very favourable reception in Brabant and the other provinces. His subjects had gained their purpose, and rejoiced in being at peace with France, but Maximilian was still full of bitterness and his heart was set upon revenge. He openly broke the Treaty of Arras by taking possession of Omer, but the next year this city was again occupied by the French under Philippe de Crèvecœur, and the only result of his useless campaign was to excite the indignation of the people by the presence of his German and Swiss mercenaries. Moreover during the last disturbed years of his rule, the English trade had gradually left Flanders, and the country was more dependent than ever upon her commerce with France.

All these matters may have combined to irritate the unruly citizens of Ghent, who complained loudly of the taxes and above all of the exactions of unpaid mercenaries, and openly rebelled against the Archduke, who first tried to pacify them by holding a Council at Yprès. He then went on to Bruges with a small escort to meet the Deans of the trades in person, when a most amazing and humiliating event took place. Excited by false reports, the burghers rang the great alarm-bell of the guilds, they turned the market-place into a fortified camp, and during nearly four months they kept the King of the Romans a prisoner within the gates of his own city. Part of this time he was shut up in the Cranenburg, a house by the market, and later, when all his soldiers had been turned out of the place, he was kept a close captive in the fortified palace of Adolf Lord of Ravenstein. The rebels of Ghent arrived in thousands before the gates to shout their encouragement and approval of the insult, and the men of Bruges, wild with triumph, proceeded to behead a number of Maximilian's most trusted followers, before his eyes. In vain did the Emperor Frederick and Pope Innocent VIII thunder forth their threats of condign punishment ; the levies of Bruges boldly sallied forth to attack the Burgundian garrisons in Middleburg and other towns, while Ghent too joined in the civil war.

When at length news came that the Emperor was actually marching upon Bruges, the strongest pressure was put upon his son to yield to the demands of his subjects, and not until he had done so, and had given hostages, was he set free when the imperial army was almost at the gates. Maximilian had promised to leave Flanders within four days of his deliverance, but when he met Frederick III at Louvain, advancing full of wrath against rebellious Liège, he appears to have felt himself compelled as a prince of the Empire, and not "for his own quarrel," to join in the campaign. It must have been a most painful position for the Archduke, as a man of honour, to break his vow, but this is the excuse advanced by his partisans.

A long and tedious war followed, with varying success; Philip of Cleves, the hostage left at Bruges, having become the leader of the rebellion. At length, after abandoning the siege of Ghent, the Emperor returned to Germany in October, and Maximilian followed him later, having appointed Duke Albert of Saxony as his governor in the Netherlands. In this position, the Duke proved himself a splendid general, and after suppressing an outbreak in Holland, he was completely victorious in Brabant, where the Peace of Frankfort with France was warmly welcomed by the whole country, more especially by Louvain and Bruges, which had suffered terribly both from war and plague. Driven to extremity, the cities of Flanders sued for pardon to their lord, and in return for his acknowledgment as Regent many former privileges were restored to the burghers.

But scarcely was this settled before fresh disturbances broke out during the absence of Duke Albert in Germany. Bruges and Ghent were as usual the chief offenders, and there was also a great rising of 5,000 peasants who bore the banner of the Virgin, while their ensign was a loaf of rye bread and a green cheese, to testify to their needs. This misguided host was betrayed by its leaders on news of the return of Albert of Saxony, and perished miserably, when again the towns returned to their allegiance. The last place to yield was Sluys, where the Lord of Ravenstein, father of Philip of Cleves, died during the siege.

It is interesting to find that English ships sent by Henry VII had taken part in this attack, Maximilian having concluded an intimate alliance with the English King, who had recently made a friendly commercial treaty with Bruges. The King of the Romans was ready to do anything in his hatred of France, and in 1490 he had been successful in arranging a marriage with Anne, the heiress of Bretagne, whose father, Duke François II, had died two years before, after making a compulsory peace with the French Regent, Anne de Beaujeu. The Duchess Anne of Bretagne, like Marie de Bourgogne before her, had thought to find a protector in the Archduke of Austria, and all arrangements were made for a marriage with him by proxy on March 31, 1490. But unfortunately Maximilian was always a laggard in love, and he delayed to hasten to the help of his bride and make sure of her.

At that critical moment the death of Matthias Corvinus King of Hungary (April 6) seemed to give him a splendid opportunity of recovering Vienna and Lower Austria, and all his thoughts were turned towards an immediate expedition. He was successful in expelling the Hungarians from his father's capital; and although Wladislav of Bohemia took the place of Matthias on the throne of Hungary, the ancient contract was ultimately renewed that, in default of male heirs, Maximilian should eventually succeed. The war in Hungary did not come to an end until November 1491, when the Peace of Presburg was signed. Meantime the negligent suitor of Anne de Bretagne was destined to pay dearly for his delay and apparent indifference. Like the heiress of Burgundy, Anne had many suitors, and although her wedding to the Austrian Archduke had at last been concluded by proxy in December 1490, nothing could secure this precious bride but her lord's personal presence and protection.

Yet always a dreamer, and absorbed by the interests of the moment, Maximilian lingered in his eastern provinces, while the young French King, aware of the supreme importance for France of Anne's inheritance, pressed on his pursuits. The Duchess, a girl of barely fifteen, was besieged at Rennes and compelled to accept the terms offered her; to break off her marriage contract with the King of the Romans, and become the wife of Charles VIII without even waiting for the needful dispensation from the Pope.

This took place in December 1491, and we may imagine the dismay and indignation of Maximilian, who thus was not only robbed of his own bride, but saw his daughter Marguerite cast off and repudiated after having been for eight years looked upon as the nominal Queen of France. In his fierce wrath at this defiant breach of faith, he would have set Europe in a blaze, but the German nobles and the Flemish burghers alike refused to help him in a war against France, while his lukewarm allies, Henry VII of England and Ferdinand of Spain, were persuaded by bribes of land or money to forsake his cause.

The Treaty of Arras had been shamelessly broken, and the Hapsburg pride had been cruelly wounded, for that great House had ever been wont to gain more territory by marriage than by conquest. In this case the old distich was certainly not realised:

> Bella gerant alii, tu felix Austria nube
> Nam puæ Mars aliis, dat tibi regna Venus.

The situation was still more serious from the fact that Marguerite of Burgundy was still detained in France, no steps were taken to return her dowry, and there was fresh trouble in Guelderland by French support of Charles of Egmond, who early in 1492 was set free from his foreign prison. At length hatred had to give way to policy, and, after some success in Artois, Maximilian accepted Swiss mediation towards a truce with France, which was followed by the Peace of Senlis on May 23, 1493, in which it was arranged that the young Austrian princess should be sent home and most of her dowry should be given back. This concession on the part of Charles VIII did not meet with the approval of all his councillors, for the Sire de Granville remarked: " Si le roy mon maistre voulait croire mon conseil, il ne rendrait jamais fille ne fillette, ville ne villette. . . ."

However, the young girl, who was now thirteen, was escorted back to her native land with all honour and dignity, and we are told that when the burghers of Cambray welcomed her with the cry of "Noël!" she called out joyously "Vive Bourgogne!" At Valenciennes, where her French guard of honour was to leave her, Marguerite had a splendid reception, the streets, from the city gate to the town hall, being decorated with tapestry hangings and lighted with innumerable torches. The town guilds met her in stately procession, and entertained her with historical pageants; such as the Anointing of the King of the Romans, the Story of Sainte Marguerite, Pegasus Flying in the Air, Daniel and Habakkuk, the Five Foolish and the Five Wise Virgins, and at the end a young girl coming forth with a flower, a marguerite.

After leaving Valenciennes the young princess had a narrow escape from a plot of some "Landsknechte" to take her captive and hold her in pledge for the pay due to them. This incident gives some idea of the disturbed condition of the country. During the next four years Marguerite appears to have spent most of her time at Namur. Meantime steps were taken to carry out the other conditions of the Peace of Senlis. Artois and the Franche-Comté remained with Burgundy, though Arras reverted to France in exchange for other towns.

In this same year, 1493, occurred the death of the Emperor Frederick III, who for some years had retired from public business, most unwillingly, as he always had a grudging feeling of jealousy towards his son. He had been for some time in failing health, suffering from decay of the bones of one leg. As long as possible he refused to allow an operation to be performed, and at length when enduring the agony of amputation at the knee cried out: "Alas! Kaiser Frederick, that you must bear to all posterity the nickname of 'the Lame'!" But he was not long suffered to endure this indignity, for he died soon afterwards, it is said from eating too many melons, on August 19, 1493, at the age of seventy-eight. During his long reign of fifty-three years it may be said that the imperial authority had been reduced to a mere shadow.

His son Maximilian had now become in reality a political power as Head of the Empire. He had hitherto been unable to carry out his progressive views, for, at the Diets which had taken place since his election, the narrow-minded obstinacy of the old Emperor had carried the day. Even when at the Diet of Frankfort, 1489, Frederick, who wanted money for his Turkish scheme, had promised concessions they were not carried out. At this important Diet, in which the imperial cities were first summoned to take their place, Berthold, the patriot Archbishop of Mainz, had eagerly urged for the second time the great objects of the "Landfriede" or Public Peace, and the formation of an Imperial Court of Justice.

Great hopes had been raised once more at the Diet of Nürnburg, 1491, when Maximilian had warmly supported these suggestions, and had recommended that the Public Peace, instead of being carried for ten years, should be proclaimed *for ever*, with a suitable Court to carry its decisions. But the well-meaning young sovereign was ever one to give way to the impulse of the moment ; he was a dreamer whose mind was so full of magnificent plans of international intervention, that he had no time or energy to devote to the more homely task of improving the condition of his own country. His absorbing ideal at the time of his father's death, was the desire to assert his imperial authority in Italy, which his enemy Charles VIII was already making preparations to invade.

The Emperor was at this time on terms of friendship with Lodovico Sforza, the ruler of Milan, who thought his alliance sufficiently desirable to offer Maximilian the hand of his niece, Bianca Maria, with a princely dowry of 300,000 ducats. This young lady, who had attained the mature age of twenty-one, was the daughter of Gáleazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan and Bona of Savoy. The Sforza family were of peasant origin, a fact which the proud German nobles could never forgive in the bride of their lord, although his need of money was so great that her dowry more than atoned for her lowly descent. Bianca had already been twice betrothed, first to Philibert le Chasseur Duke of Savoy, and after his untimely death to the eldest son of Matthias Corvinus King of Hungary, who being disinherited, lost his expected bride as well as his kingdom.

On this third occasion, when her marriage was carried out successfully, the Italian princess may well have been elated at the high position of Empress which awaited her, and her mother, the widowed Duchess Bona, wept with joy and satisfied ambition; for Bianca's future life of sadness and disappointment was hidden in the future. A splendid marriage ceremony took place by proxy at Milan; then followed a long and terrible journey in the dead of winter over "those fearful, cruel mountains," crossing the Stelvio Pass in storm and snow and reaching Innsbruck on Christmas Eve to find that her laggard bridegroom was still at Vienna. Here he remained for the next three months, and only with difficulty was he induced to meet his bride at Ala on March 9. Maximilian always declared that his heart was buried with his first wife, Marie of Burgundy, and he never felt much interest in poor Bianca, although he treated her with unfailing courtesy. She accompanied her husband in the summer of 1494 to the Netherlands, where he went to transfer the government to his son Philippe, who was declared to have attained his majority at sixteen. The young prince and his sister Marguerite welcomed the imperial bridegroom and bride with splendid festivities at Maestricht, where they held a gay court with the nobles of the province.

Marguerite does not appear to have had much in common with her stepmother, for in the mass of correspondence which has been preserved, between her father and herself, we never find even a casual mention of the Empress, until the mention of her last illness and death, in a few compassionate letters.

At this we can scarcely wonder, for the pupil of Anne de Beaujeu would have little sympathy with a frivolous lady who delighted in the extravagant fashions of Milan, and was brought up by a mother, "dame de petit sens," as Commines called her. He had occasion to know the Lady Bona well, for she was a sister of Charlotte of Savoy, Queen of Louis XI, and she lived for years at the French Court.

CHAPTER VII

INVASION OF ITALY BY CHARLES VIII

1494—1495

Invasion of Italy by Charles VIII of France—At Pavia he meets Gian Galeazzo, whose death leaves Lodovico Sforza Duke of Milan—Charles passes victorious through Italy, and takes Naples—League formed against him—His retreat blocked by the Allies at Fornovo, 1495, *but the French are successful in making their escape across the Alps—Disappointment of the Emperor Maximilian.*

THE great event of the year 1494 was the invasion of Italy by Charles VIII. This young prince was the first of his race to be irresistibly attracted by that fatal mirage of conquest in the ancient land of the Romans, which, like a will-of-the-wisp, was to lead one King of France after another to his destruction. This expedition had long been the settled project of Charles, but the opposition of his wise sister, the Regent Anne, had prevented its accomplishment until his majority was declared and he was his own master. He had two definite excuses for his ambitious projects. The first was the claim to Milan founded on the marriage of the first Duke of Orleans to Valentina Visconti, whose right to succeed her father had been strengthened by a Papal Brief. The second French claim was to Naples, which Queen Joanna on her death, in

1435, had left to Louis III of Anjou with succession to René, who made Louis XI his heir. Sixtus IV had urged Louis XI to conquer this kingdom "which belonged to him," but the King was far too prudent to risk the good of his country for such a wild-goose chase.

It was far otherwise with his son and heir. Charles VIII had been successful in his domestic affairs, had won his bride and her good lands of Bretagne; he had a splendid army, thanks to the persistent devotion of Louis XI. His artillery was the best in Europe, his cavalry was well trained and full of enthusiasm, and his infantry could be strengthened to any extent by standing contracts with the Swiss. The young courtiers who surrounded him pointed out that the conquest of Naples would give him Sicily, which bore with it the crown of Jerusalem, and would pave the way for that Crusade which all Europe demanded. Italian intrigue also lured on the ambitious young King. Lodovico Sforza sent a private embassy with splendid presents, his object being to obtain French help for his own ambitious designs, and to turn the tide of war against Naples.

Before setting forth on his expedition Charles had been compelled to make peace with England by the Peace of Etables, November 1492, which cost him an immense ransom, and he also had to buy the neutrality of Ferdinand of Spain by yielding to him, without indemnity, the long-contested counties of Roussillon and Cendagne, and as we have seen, he had concluded the Peace of Senlis with the

Emperor. There had been long delay, and preparations for war had continued for many months when Charles, having already assumed the title of King of Sicily and of Jerusalem, advanced to Lyons on March 6, 1494.

His army had to be made up from all sources to a total of 22,000 infantry, but there was long and fatal delay from inexperience and incompetence, so that it was not until the end of May that a small body of troops actually crossed the Alps. A portion of the army was sent by sea to Genoa, in August the Duke of Orleans took command, and hostilities commenced the next month with a naval battle near Rapallo in which the French and Genoese were successful. Meantime Charles had crossed the Alps and early in September reached Asti, where he was welcomed by the Duke of Ferrara and Lodovico. Here he fell ill with some strange complaint, and when he recovered he wasted several weeks in festivities and amusements at Vigevano and at Pavia he met his unfortunate cousin, Gian Galeazzo, the nominal Duke of Milan, whose power had been usurped by his uncle Lodovico. The young Duchess Isabella of Naples made a touching appeal on behalf of her husband, but the French King was powerless to help him, and shortly afterwards, at Piacenza, received news of Duke Gian's death, the close of a tragedy.[1]

Charles passed on through Pontremoli and, crossing the Apennines, reached the dominions of Florence and set siege to Sarzana. Here Piero dei Medici sought him and offered to surrender everything, but the citizens of Florence rose against their lord on his return, and expelled him. The French King was received with servile acclamations in Lucca and Pisa, where he left a garrison, and continuing his march to Florence, he was welcomed with due honour, although the large army which he had brought with him soon gave the citizens cause for complaint.

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[1] See "Isabella of Milan" (Christopher Hare), p. 180.

Worse was to follow, for Charles insisted upon receiving a large sum of money as well as the towns of Sarzana, Pietra Santa, Pisa, and Livorno. In vain Capponi threatened to call the people of Florence to arms, the French demands had to be granted before the French army would leave the city. Charles now pursued his triumphant progress towards Rome, and Pope Alexander VI recognised his critical position, for the Eternal City could not be defended against this overwhelming force. After much anxiety and vacillation, he gave up any idea of resistance, and the French King entered Rome on the last day of that eventful year.

When Charles VIII left Rome on January 28, all his demands were satisfied and he took with him Cæsar Borgia, Cardinal of Valencia, as the Pope's Legate (but in reality as a hostage), to give a kind of religious authority to his military expedition. All was prosperous for a time, as the people had fled before him, leaving the country waste, and Alfonso King of Naples had resigned in favour of his popular son Ferrantino. Fortress after fortress surrendered without a blow, Gaeta and Capua threw open their gates, and at length Naples sent embassies to invite the coming of her conqueror. The French entered the capital on February 22, and, full of triumph and vain-glory at their amazing success, gave themselves up to indolent pleasures.

Charles appeared to have attained all his desires, yet there were not wanting certain significant warnings of coming trouble. Cæsar Borgia had made his escape from the French camp at Velletri, where a Spanish embassy had met the French King with reproaches for his interference with the Holy Father. Lodovico Sforza, now Duke of Milan, indignant at being refused Sarzana and Pietra Santa as his part of the spoil, was already joining intrigues against him. Charles was crowned King of Naples and attempted to make some useful laws, but, as Commines describes the behaviour of the French: "We spent our time in gaiety, entertainments, dancing and tournaments, and grew so insolent and vain, we scarce considered the Italians to be men." Such conduct could not fail to meet with the Nemesis which it deserved.

Meantime Commines was sent as ambassador to Venice to persuade that important State to take active part on the side of France. It came as a shock of surprise to him when he was informed by the Doge on March 31, 1495, that he had joined an alliance with "our Holy Father the Pope, the Kings of the Romans and of Castile, and the Duke of Milan for the defence of Italy." Commines was desired to inform King Charles of this, and to add that the Venetian ambassadors in attendance upon him were to return to Venice. The French King was soon informed of this dangerous League against him—a bolt from the blue—but he delayed his departure from Naples until nearly the end of May.

With profound interest and the deepest indignation, Maximilian had watched from afar every step of this triumphant invasion, which seemed a deadly blow to imperial interests in Italy. Nothing could exceed his desire to join the League against the French, which had in great measure been started by the treachery of the Duke of Milan. Ferdinand of Spain, who had his own designs upon Naples, was one of the most urgent in promoting this secret conspiracy against Charles VIII. In order to make sure of the Emperor's support, he suggested a double alliance between their families; the marriage of his son the Infante Don Juan, heir to the Spanish throne, with the Princess Marguerite of Austria, and that of his daughter Juana with the young Archduke Philippe. These weddings, of which all the advantage was destined to be on the side of Austria, were successfully carried out the following year.

But Maximilian was powerless to take any useful part in the struggle without the sinews of war, and he found it absolutely necessary to obtain a large grant of money. The Diet of Worms was therefore summoned to meet in March 1495, but there was much difficulty in procuring the attendance of the Electors at this important crisis, notwithstanding urgent persuasion. The Emperor in person made a strong appeal to the Estates to vote him an immediate grant in order to check the success of the French in Italy; he also demanded a regular subsidy for twelve years in order to form a standing army of Landsknechte and so redeem the honour of the Empire.

He was listened to with marked coldness and indifference, and it was Berthold of Mainz who rose to announce that the Electors could only grant money on their own terms, and that redress must come before supply. This great leader of the democracy had at last found his opportunity, and he needs here a few words of special notice. Count Berthold of Henneberg, Archbishop of Mainz, was now a man of fifty-three, who for the last eleven years had not only ruled his province with justice and wisdom, but had distinguished himself as an Elector by his vigour and eloquence and by his patriotic enthusiasm on the subject of national policy and reform. He was more a statesman than a priestly bishop, and his heart was set upon a national united life for his country, and to this end he devoted himself with the utmost courage and perseverance. Only by sad experience did he discover that it was a visionary task to inspire with his own enthusiasm the petty feudal lords, who only really cared for their own selfish interests. Still for a time, he won over the whole college of Electors and was definitely accepted as their leader. They fully agreed with his pertinent demand at the Diet of Worms: "Why should their German States, whose country needed all their devotion, and whose only hope was in peace, go out of their way to undertake a long and tedious war in an alien land?" Yet on certain conditions, the Diet might be induced to give the

King of the Romans the financial help which he required.

The old demands which Berthold had made in 1485 were again put forth with renewed urgency. The Landfriede, or Public Peace, and other reforms were again fully explained; but the first necessity was for the appointment of a permanent Imperial Council, to represent the Electors and all the other Estates of the Empire. This was to have supreme authority and no act of Maximilian was to be considered legal without its approval. The only real authority which it was proposed to give the sovereign was absolute command in time of war, but hostilities were never to begin without the permission of the Council. If any difficulty arose about the decision of the Council, Maximilian would only have a single vote like any other member. In conclusion, if he accepted this democratic scheme, a "Common Penny" would be levied and an army raised "to be under the orders of the Council." Now this Common Penny had always been a stumbling-block. It was a curious mixture of income tax and poll tax, a roughly assessed and rudely graduated property tax. The knights had always refused to pay it, while the abbots and clergy refused to recognise the demands of a merely secular body.

We cannot wonder that the Emperor looked upon these proposals from his subjects as a veiled demand that he would resign his rule over them; but he kept his temper and cleverly contrived to discuss minor points of debate. Then he made a proposal that the Council, whose value he fully acknowledged, would only be required to act independently during the sovereign's absence; to this he added other suggestions which would make it merely a royal Council, completely subordinate to the royal wishes. This was fully discussed during a process of long and weary negotiation, and at length the reforming members of the Diet came to the conclusion that it would be wiser to give up their Executive Council than suffer it to be so transformed.

This took place on August 7, and the Diet then turned to the other suggestions—the Common Penny, the Public Peace, and the Imperial Court of Justice, which Maximilian had already declared his willingness to accept. The Landfriede was proclaimed in perpetuity, and private war was absolutely forbidden to all feudal subjects under penalty of the ban of the Empire. This law of Public Peace was apparently to be carried out, by making those who dwelt within twenty miles of an armed quarrel, responsible for it and bound to interfere. If they were unable to make peace, the Diet was bound to vindicate the law. Pleading in Court was to take the place of violence.

The new Imperial Tribunal was to have at its head a chief Judge who was chosen by the sovereign, with sixteen assessors under him, half of knightly rank and the other half Doctors of Law, who were to be elected by the Estates, and whose authority was supreme. Roman Law was to be administered in this Court, which was new in Germany with regard to land rights, although the maxims of Roman Law in Justinian's "Corpus Juris" had been in a great measure accepted since the age of Conrad III (1138–

1152). It is very interesting to remember that by this decision of the Imperial Court, Roman Law spread not only to the Netherlands, but to the Dutch East Indies, to Ceylon, and to South Africa.

The newly formed Tribunal was not to follow the sovereign, but to remain at some fixed place at the will of the Estates, by whom also its officers were to be paid, thus making it independent of the Emperor. The Council had supreme jurisdiction over all people and all lawsuits, and its decrees were to be immediately carried out. It was also decided that the Diet was to meet every year, and no important matter could be settled even by the monarch without its formal consent. Maximilian was compelled to agree to this, but he felt it was quite a different thing from a Council always sitting with absolute control over everything. The new universal tax, the Common Penny, was established for four years, was to be collected locally, and then given into the care of seven imperial treasurers, carefully chosen by the Emperor and his subjects. In return for his concessions, Maximilian was allowed to take 150,000 florins from this fund to pay the expenses of his Italian expedition. But it was not until September that the Diet of Worms broke up, and events had made such rapid progress that it was now too late for him to intervene in Italy, for the French had escaped.

We left Charles VIII still master of Naples, from which he reluctantly retreated on May 21, 1495, taking only half of his army and leaving the rest with the Viceroy, Charles de Montpensier, to protect his conquests against King Ferrantino, who had recently landed in Calabria, and was supported by Spain. When the French King arrived at Rome, the Pope had taken refuge at Orvieto, and Charles continued his journey by Pisa to Spezia, where he left 2,000 foot soldiers and 500 cavalry to oppose Genoa. Pontremoli surrendered to him and he was thus master of the Pass, beyond which the army of the League was lying in wait for him. With infinite labour, the heavy artillery was drawn by the Swiss mercenaries over the steep mountain path, and at length the straggling columns of the army reached Fornovo in the valley of the Taro, and encamped there for the night. The opposing forces had taken up their station on the right bank of the river, where they had formed a fortified camp. They were commanded by Francesco Gonzaga Marquis of Mantua, and were in strong force, about 40,000 men in the pay of Venice. Amongst these were several thousands of Stradiots, the fierce horsemen of Albania, and a certain number of troops from Milan.

The next morning, July 6, the French King decided to cross the Taro and force a way along the left bank, which was accomplished with much difficulty, as there had been heavy rain and the river was in flood. The army of Charles had been reduced by famine and fever until it scarcely numbered nine thousand. In the vanguard was a strong body of men-at-arms, the chief part of the artillery, and about three thousand Swiss. This portion, gallantly commanded by the King in person, became separated from the rest of the army, and was attacked by the cavalry of Milan without much effect. The main force of the battle fell upon the rear, which was hardly pressed by the force under Francesco Gonzaga. All this took place in a tremendous thunderstorm, which echoed through the hills as though all the artillery of heaven took part in the conflict. At a critical moment, the Stradiots caught sight of the baggage waggons moving away from the river, and made off with one consent in pursuit, giving themselves up to plunder. The Italian horsemen, who made a brave attack, were outflanked and put to flight, being pursued as far as the ford. This brought confusion to the army of the allies, many of whom took no part in the battle.

So fierce was the fighting that, although it lasted a bare half-hour, there was fearful bloodshed, for few prisoners were taken, and the fallen men-at-arms were killed with hatchets by the camp followers. Both sides claimed the victory; but the French certainly had the best of it, as they thus succeeded in forcing their way through an overwhelming force, and marching off unmolested during the night. Charles had lost all the rich treasures of his camp, but he may well have been thankful to have escaped with his life.

The French King reached Asti on July 15, to find that his fleet had been taken by Genoa, and that all the precious and valuable plunder which had been brought from Naples was lost to him. As for his cousin, Louis of Orleans, he had unwisely allowed himself to be besieged in Novara, and urgent help was needed to save the garrison. All the radiant hopes with which Charles had set forth on his career of conquest, were crushed and destroyed ; nothing remained for him but to make a truce at Vercelli, and take his way back across the Alps, a sadder and a wiser man. He did not reach Lyons until after the middle of October.

CHAPTER VIII

MARRIAGE ALLIANCES OF THE HOUSE OF HAPSBURG

1495—1500

Maximilian arranges a double alliance with Spain : his daughter Marguerite to marry the Infante Juan, and the Archduke Charles to marry Princess Juana, who by a series of deaths becomes heiress of Spain—Her son Charles born in 1500*—Maximilian raises an army and invades Italy—His disastrous failure—War with the Swiss—Louis XII defeats Lodovico of Milan, who is taken prisoner —Diet of Augsburg.*

DURING the following year, 1496, Maximilian concluded his negotiations with Ferdinand and Isabel of Spain for the double alliance which was to connect their Houses. The Archduke Philippe was to marry Juana, the second daughter of the Spanish sovereigns, and the Princess Marguerite was to become the wife of the Infante Don Juan, heir to the throne of Spain. The arrangement was the more easily concluded as the exchange of princesses would obviate any difficult question of dowry on either side.

Juana was now seventeen years old, a year younger than Philippe, who, besides his splendid position as lord of all the dominions of his mother, was heir of Austria and other lands, and was also rumoured to be

" the most handsome young man in Europe." This wedding was to take place first, and it was settled that the Spanish princess should sail from the port of Lareda, near Santander, on August 22, 1496, under the protection of an armed fleet, as there was war with France at that time. The voyage was a terrible experience in rough weather, and when the fleet was driven for shelter into the harbour of Portland, two caravels were missing; another vessel foundered on the coast of Flanders, and poor Juana lost some of her personal attendants as well as most of her rich wedding presents.

She was received at Antwerp, where she did not arrive until September 18, by Marguerite, her stepmother, and Margaret of York, Dowager Duchess of Burgundy; but Philippe was away in the Tyrol. The Spanish bride travelled on to Lille to meet him, and we are told that she rode her mule " in Spanish fashion," and was escorted by a band of music. The young Archduke appears to have been as much a laggard in love as his father, for the marriage did not take place till late in October. Brussels had been chosen for their residence, and a palace prepared for them in that city.

Meantime the Spanish fleet and the ladies-in-waiting on the Infanta, were to return in the suite of the Princess Marguerite, and they set sail to brave once more the terrors of the ocean, in January 1497. This voyage was still more stormy than the last, and the ships met with such tremendous gales that some of them were wrecked, and the Princess herself was in serious danger. But she showed a brave heart and tried to cheer her ladies, even writing a distich on her adventures:

Ci-gist Margot, la gente demoiselle,
Qu'eut deux maris, et si mourut pucelle.

Fortunately this quaint epitaph was not required, although the noble company were driven by stress of weather into an English port. Queen Isabel of Spain had written to ask for hospitality, in case of need, from Henry VII, and he sent a courteous letter to Marguerite praying her to remain at Southampton as long as she pleased, "for we believe that the movement and roaring of the sea is disagreeable to Your Highness and the ladies who accompany you."

The Austrian princess had a magnificent reception when, early in March, she landed safely at the port of Santander, and she was warmly welcomed at Burgos by the Queen of Spain. The wedding took place as soon as Lent was over, and every promise of happiness seemed to await the young bride, for the Infante Juan, heir to so great a kingdom, had also every charm of person and character, and was spoken of as the "delight of his parents and the idol of his people." But all too soon these brilliant hopes were shattered; once more Marguerite was pursued by misfortune. Barely eighteen months later her beloved husband was taken from her by the deadly pestilence which ever seemed to lurk in those mediæval cities, and when, a little later, her child was born, the hoped-for heir of Spain and her vast dependencies, "Elle eut bien courte joie de son enfantement et n'eut guère titre de mère,"[1] for the fragile babe did but open her eyes for one brief moment and passed away.

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[1] Le Maire, Jehan, "Triomphe d'honneur et de vertu."

The succession now passed to the eldest daughter of the Spanish sovereigns, Isabel Queen of Portugal. A son was born to her in August 1498, but it was at the cost of his mother's life, and the infant prince died two years later, leaving Juana of Spain, the wife of the Archduke Philippe—heiress of Spain and the rich discoveries of the New World. By this strange fatality the marriage of Philippe, which had seemed of much less importance than that of his sister, proved ultimately to exercise the greatest influence on the history of Europe. The old adage was once more justified, that "by marriage Austria won more success than by war," for the son born to Philippe and Juana at Ghent, on February 24, 1500, afterwards the Emperor Charles V, became heir to vast dominions, beyond even the wildest dreams of his grandfather Maximilian.

A daughter had already been born to Juana in November 1498, who received the name of Eléonora, from her Portuguese great-grandmother. There had been great festivities on this occasion, but they were far surpassed by the rejoicings on the birth of the heir. He received the name of Charles, in memory of the mighty Duke of Burgundy, whose widow, the Dowager Duchess Margaret of York, held the infant at the font and gave him a splendid cup inlaid with precious stones.

This masterful lady still upheld the claims of the pretended Richard of York in order to carry on her vendetta against the House of Lancaster, and Maximilian having also encouraged him, Henry VII retorted by putting a stop to the commerce between his subjects and the Netherlands. But Duke Philippe had already shown a tendency to rule independently of his father's control, and now, at the entreaty of the burghers, he made overtures of peace to England, and the result was the signing of the "Magnus Intercursus," which proclaimed freedom of trade once more. It was not only in matters of commerce that the young Archduke differed from the Emperor, for he was guided by the advice of Guillaume de Croy, Seigneur de Chièvres, whose aim was a permanent alliance with France. This was opposed to the whole policy of Maximilian, who had recently been thwarted in the scheme nearest to his heart.

In the autumn of 1496 Charles VIII was preparing for a fresh invasion into Italy, having won over the Swiss Cantons and Florence; on this the rival States of Milan and Venice, becoming alarmed, invited the help of the Emperor, with an offer to pay each 30,000 ducats for three months towards the pay of his troops, thus making him their condottiere. The views of Maximilian on this subject are best expressed in his own words: "Italy has for centuries experienced what it means for the people, if no Emperor is there to restrain unruly passions, and hence the friends of the people have ever looked with favour on the imperial power and longed for the return of the Emperor."[1]

His pride was not hurt by the offer of pecuniary help, for indeed he was always short of money.

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[1] Janssen, i. 586.

When he travelled through the Netherlands on the honeymoon with his second wife, Bianca, he constantly had to leave some precious jewel in pawn when he could not pay his inn bills. Again, in a letter dated May 27, 1496, his councillors at Worms send an urgent request for funds to meet the household expenses, as "the Queen and her ladies have provision for only three or four days longer; and if within that time no money comes, even their supply of food will come to an end."[1]

In eager haste Maximilian began the preparations for his expedition, having been compelled after all to borrow the necessary money from the great bankers, the Fuggers, while he awaited a grant from the Estates of the realm. He had summoned the Diet to meet him at Chiavenna, and when the princes refused to cross the Alps, he compromised so far as to appoint Lindau on the Lake of Constance, a most inconvenient place, which the Emperor had chosen as being near Italy. But never had he found the princes less amenable to his will, for the few who attended brought neither the money due from the Common Penny, nor the quota of soldiers demanded for the Italian expedition. Berthold of Mainz seized his opportunity and addressed the Diet in passionate appeal. What cared they for conquest in Italy, and why should their hardly earned money go to purchase doubtful military glory in a foreign land, where success would only bring them fresh anxiety and expense? In the absence of the Emperor, he insisted upon the carrying out of the Edict of Worms, and secured other important measures. Finally it was arranged that another Diet should meet at Worms the following spring.

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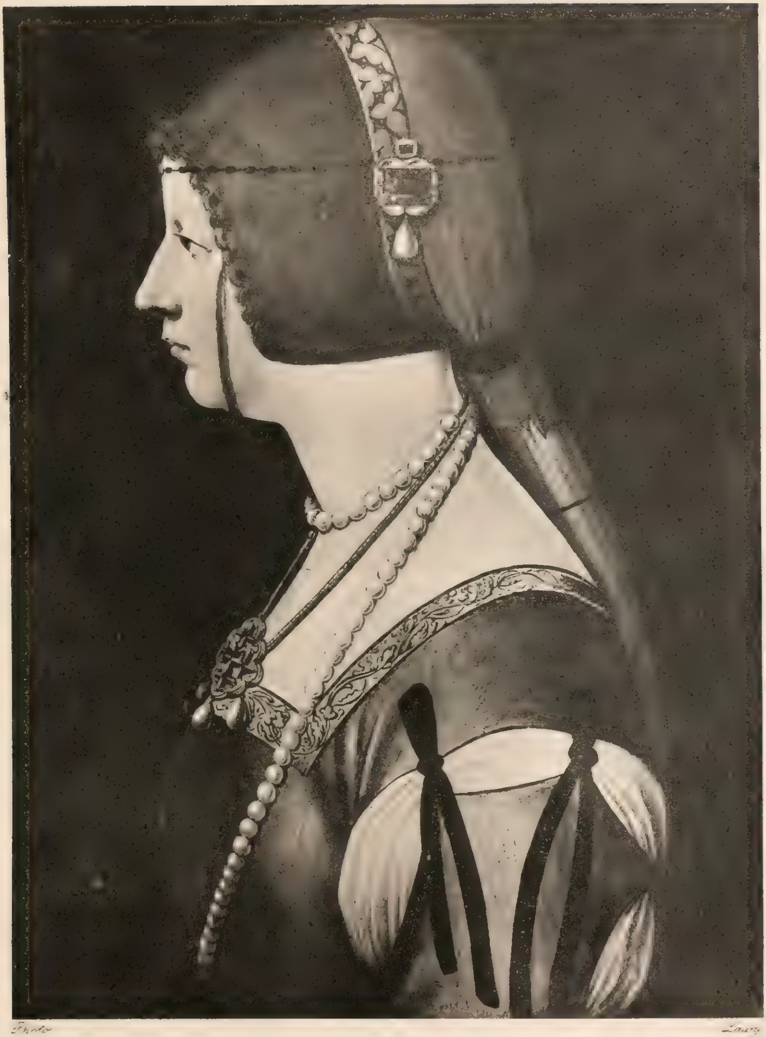
[1] "Vertr. Briefwechsel," p. 103.

Meantime Maximilian had raised a company of horsemen and a body of Swiss mercenaries, so that by the end of September he had the nucleus of a small army gathered round him at Vigevano. Lodovico had an interview with him at Munster, where he was with a hunting party. There was still further delay, but at length the forces of the League met at Genoa in very unpropitious weather. From thence the Emperor moved on to Pisa and attempted the siege of Livorno, the seaport of Florence. The fleets of Venice and Genoa attacked from the sea and occupied the harbour, but help came from Florence and from the French fleet, and in November Maximilian felt compelled to raise the siege and would have attacked Florence, but there were rumours that his line of attack would be cut off. He reached Pavia at the beginning of December, and here learnt that a truce had been concluded between France and the King of Spain. He had met with nothing but disappointment and disaster, his resources were now exhausted, and vowing that "against the will of God and men he would not wage this war," he hurried across the Alps, refusing to listen to the entreaties of the Papal Legate.

The failure of this disastrous expedition left the influence of France more powerful than ever in Italy, but the premature death of Charles VIII on April 7, 1498, changed the situation for a time. He was succeeded by Louis XII, who was still more set upon



Bianca Sforza.

Wife of Maximilian I, Emperor of Austria

Ambrogio de Predis.

conquest in Italy than his cousin, for besides Naples, he made claim to Milan as the heir of Valentine Visconti. His first public act was to divorce his wife Jeanne and to marry Anne de Bretagne, the widow of Charles VIII. To carry out this shameful proceeding, he was obliged to humiliate himself before the Pope Alexander VI, and he began at once to carry out the cunning policy of winning over each member of the League in succession. Once more the young Archduke Philippe was induced to act in direct opposition to his father's policy, and to conclude with France a separate Treaty of Brussels, by which he renounced all claims to the Duchy of Burgundy, in return for the restoration of the towns in Picardy; and he even promised to pay homage to France for Artois and Flanders.

Maximilian was furious, and again had recourse to the Diet, which was then sitting at Worms, but he caused it to be moved to the city of Freiburg in the Breisgau. He made a violent speech against the Estates, declaring that they cared nothing for the glory of the Empire and only hindered him in his foreign policy. "I have been betrayed in Italy," he exclaimed, "I have been forsaken in Germany; but I will no more suffer myself to be bound hand and foot as at Worms. Say what you will to me, I will carry on the war myself. I would sooner renounce my oath at Frankfort, for I rule the House of Austria as well as the Empire."

In this state of discord no great success was possible. But Maximilian set forth on an unprofitable punitive expedition against Charles Count of Egmond, who called himself Duke of Guelderland, and fought for the French side on the Lower Rhine. But a far more serious difficulty awaited the Emperor. With his usual astuteness, Louis XII saw that the most vulnerable point for attack on the Empire was the Swiss Confederacy, and to this he devoted all his intrigues. Encouraged secretly by his agents, the Swiss, who had already refused to join the Swabian League, now declined to pay their share of the Common Penny, and threw off all allegiance to the Imperial Council (Kammergericht).

The Confederacy of the Swiss Cantons had long been drifting into independence, although it still remained nominally a part of the Empire. The sturdy race, who lived in the mountain lands lying between the frontier of France and the Italian slopes of the Alps, had but little in common with the other peoples of Germany. A strong league of their own had made these mountaineers a kind of independent Republic, owning little more than a shadowy allegiance to the Emperor. The peasants and burghers who watched over their cattle, tilled the barren land, or carried on their simple manufactures or trades in those mountain valleys, had come to ignore feudalism as a system of government, and to form a complete democracy amongst themselves.

We cannot wonder that the German nobles, who clung to their feudal rights, fast melting away between the demands of the over-lord and the growing assertion of the free cities, felt a strong hatred for their republican Swiss neighbours. Border raids added to the bitterness of the mountain people, who expressed their feeling by insulting proverbs and songs, besides being quick with their hands when they had an opportunity for retaliation. They could not forget how their fathers had rolled the proud rider and his horse underfoot at the victorious battles of Granson, Morat, and Nancy ; and these heroic memories caused them to meet the aristocratic insults and scorn of the knights with an equal contempt. This was an unpardonable crime in the eyes of the German princes, who were convinced that the Swiss were disloyal and troublesome members, and should be taught their place. They welcomed the inevitable war as much as Maximilian disliked it, and his friend Pirkheimer, who commanded the Nuremberg troops, says that "those who were dear to the sovereign were the cause of this fighting, as they had provoked it by their injuries and exactions." He goes on to remark that "these nobles were not so bold in resisting an army as apt at robbery and the plundering of travellers, for they were strenuous in that exaction which they had inherited from their ancestors, thinking it no small proof of nobility to live like a thief from plunder and on the misery of others."

These Swiss had defeated the ancestors of Maximilian, and they had slain Charles of Burgundy, the father of his wife Marie. But the men of the Alpine valleys were dear to him for their splendid strength and courage ; they were the finest mercenaries in Europe, and his great desire was to enrol them under his banner to fight against the Turks and, incidentally, to carry out his revenge against France. Pirkheimer cannot praise them enough. The mountaineers in the Swiss militia were sworn to instant obedience under pain of death, to silence in battle, to never forsake the ranks or turn their backs on the enemy, or carry on pillage or destruction without orders. Churches must not be dishonoured, non-combatants were to be spared, but on the other hand all captives taken in battle were to be slain and not held for ransom. "They could be killed themselves also, but in no way could they be captured." Thus in that very war, the Archduke in vain offered a hundred gold pieces for a prisoner whom he might question.

Perhaps the horrors of war, to those who do not fight, have never been more vividly described than in this incident related by the sympathetic Pirkheimer:

"In a large mountain valley, whose villages were burnt and deserted, we met two old women driving about forty little boys and girls like a flock of sheep. All were starved to the most extreme emaciation and, except that they moved, not unlike corpses, so that it was horrible to see. I asked the old women where they were leading their miserable herd. Hardly had they replied, when we came to a meadow. They turned in and falling on their knees began to eat grass like cattle, except that they picked it first with their hands instead of biting it from the roots. They had already learned the varieties of the herbage, and knew what was bitter or insipid, what sweeter or pleasanter to the taste. I was horrified at so dreadful a sight, and stood for a long time like one who cannot trust his senses.

"Then the woman asked: 'Do you see why this wretched crowd is led here? Well would it have been if none of them had been born . . . their fathers have fallen by the sword, their mothers have died of starvation, their property has been carried off as booty, their houses burnt; we two wretches, tottering with age, are left to lead this miserable herd like beasts to pasture, and so far as we can, keep them alive on grass. We hope that a short time will relieve them and us from our miseries. They were twice as many, but in a brief time they were reduced to this number, since daily some die of want and hunger, far happier in a quick death than in longer life.'

"When I had seen and heard these things I could not restrain my tears, pitying the pitiable human lot, and detesting, as every true man ought, the fury of war."[1]

The only troops upon which Maximilian could place any real trust, were those belonging to the Swabian League. This confederacy had been formed by the Knights of St. George; it comprised all the chivalry of Southern Germany, and for a whole generation had greatly contributed to the peace and welfare of that portion of the Empire. The strength of this League was due in no small measure to the fact that both towns and knights had ignored their jealousies, and combined with the Princes in its formation. The rest of Maximilian's army consisted of undisciplined levies, with incompetent generals, who could not resist the gallant Swiss militia. During the six months while the war lasted one disaster after another overwhelmed the arms of Austria. On the fatal field of Dornach, July 24, 1499, Henry of Furstenberg, a Count of the Empire, fell with four thousand of his best soldiers after a most gallant fight, when the Swiss, in smaller force, put the imperial army to hopeless flight, with the loss of their artillery and banners.

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[1] Translated and quoted by Paul Van Dyke.

Pirkheimer, the companion in misfortune of his lord, declares that "in the midst of irreparable disaster, he never saw the slightest sign of perturbation in Maximilian." He faced his losses bravely, but he could not turn the tide of fortune or instil his spirit into his army. He retreated for a time to his castle of Lindau, until in September he was persuaded by his friends in Italy, especially Lodovico of Milan, to sign the Peace of Basel, which made the Swiss practically independent, although they remained nominally subject to the Empire.

It is possible that on this occasion, as on so many others, Maximilian gave up too readily, when steady persistence might have won in the end. The Venetian statesman Quirini[1] thus describes such a phase of his character:

"He had an excellent intelligence and is cleverer than any of his advisers in finding many expedients for every need. But however many he may discover, he does not know how to carry out any of them, and so he is as lacking in the power of execution, as he is ready in the power of invention. And although, out of two or three remedies for an evil which suggest themselves to his mind, he may choose one of the best, nevertheless, he does not carry out his design because, suddenly, before he can execute it, some other plan takes shape in his mind which he thinks better, and thus he is so eager to change from a good thing to a better thing, that time and occasion pass away before he does anything."

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[1] "Relazioni," etc., Serie I, vol. vii. p. 27.

This success of the Swiss was a serious disaster, for not only was the Empire deprived of its most hardy and valuable subjects, but they had won a unique position in Europe, where henceforth they were so feared and respected that no army was complete without a body of their mercenaries. Louis XII reaped the greatest advantage from his alliance with the Swiss, for there was now nothing to hinder his expedition against Milan, and with the defeat at Dornach of the imperial army, the fate of Lodovico Sforza was sealed. As we have seen, the French King had already won over Alexander VI to his side, and he now gained the friendship of Venice by the offer of Cremona, so that he met with no obstacle when he crossed the Alps at the end of July 1499, with an army of 22,000 men. His general had already passed on in front, and before the end of May had descended upon Asti with 15,000 men.

In vain had Lodovico sent the most urgent entreaties to Maximilian, imploring him to send the promised reinforcements. Trivulzio invaded the territory of Milan with a strong force and took the castle of Annona, while the Venetians passed across the eastern frontier and advanced towards the river Adda. Yet still the troops of the Empire did not arrive, and, in despair, Lodovico wrote to his niece, the Empress Bianca, telling her how he was hemmed in and reduced to extremity, and beseeching her to obtain speedy and effectual help from her husband.

With great difficulty Maximilian raised a strong German force and sent it to the help of his ally before the end of the month. Unfortunately the troops arrived too late, for when they reached the frontier of Italy they met the Duke flying for his life; he had been betrayed at the last moment, and his city of Milan had surrendered to the French.

One by one all the cities of the Milanese opened their gates to the enemy and yielded without a blow, and when Alessandria was lost by treachery, Lodovico gave up hope, and having already sent off his young sons and his treasure, he made his escape to Germany. Before leaving, he had exacted a solemn promise from his Castellan at Milan that he would hold the citadel—which was strongly garrisoned and expecting relief from the Germans—as a sacred trust. But within a month, the unfaithful governor sold his precious charge to Trivulsio, and when Lodovico, lying ill at Innsbruck, heard the news, he cried: "Since the days of Judas there has never been so foul a traitor as Bernardino del Corte." On hearing of the fall of Milan, Louis XII set forth on a triumphal progress through Italy, passing in state through Vercelli, Vigevano, and Pavia, until he reached the climax of his success at Milan, where in procession with Cardinals, ambassadors from all the chief cities of Italy, and even the personal friends of Lodovico, he made his victorious entry with pride and exultation.

The fallen Duke of Milan was received with the warmest sympathy and kindness by the Emperor, who could, however, give him but little substantial help. Yet Lodovico resolved to make one last attempt to regain his dominions; he engaged the services of 8,000 Swiss mercenaries, and with help of the Burgundian guard he made a desperate attack upon Milan, which revolted in his favour on February 2, 1500. A few days later the French garrison in the Castello was compelled to surrender. Not only was his capital now in the hands of the Duke, but Tortona, Voghera, and the chief places of Lombardy once more returned to their allegiance.

Yet this was only a brief and transitory success, for the French army, under La Trémouille and Bayard, soon joined the troops left in Italy and advanced into Lombardy with an overwhelming force. Lodovico did not wait until they had reached Milan, but made his escape by night with his men. He reached Novara in safety, but early in April he was besieged there by the French army. Next the Swiss mercenaries in the pay of the Duke declared that they would not fight against their fellow-countrymen in the French camp; they laid down their arms and Lodovico was betrayed and taken prisoner. He was carried to France and imprisoned in the dungeon of Loches, where he died ten years later.

It so chanced that it was on the very day when the Duke fell into the hands of his enemies and his career came to an end, that the Emperor met the Estates at the Diet of Augsburg. He now offered to make concessions, for he still hoped to continue his struggle with France, and could do nothing without money. The Common Penny was heartily disliked by everybody, as, amongst other evils, it involved the assembling of a Diet every year. Maximilian proposed that in its stead, the Estates should raise a permanent army of 34,000 men and provide for its maintenance. After much discussion a compromise was arrived at in July. Instead of a standing army, one was to be formed for six years; four hundred householders combining to pay and keep one foot-soldier. The citizens of imperial towns, the clergy, and the religious orders were to contribute one florin for each forty florins of income, while the Jews were to be taxed at a florin per head. Barons and Counts of the Empire were to raise one horseman for each 4,000 florins of income, while the Princes were liable for 500 horsemen each. But the most important point which Maximilian had to yield was that a Council of Regency should be formed, which was to settle matters of finance and war, and even rule the foreign policy, which hitherto had been settled by the Emperor.

This Council, which was a great triumph for Berthold of Mainz, was to consist of twenty-one members, of whom two were chosen by the towns of the Empire, sixteen by the Princes and Electors, while Maximilian only named two and the President; thus leaving the whole power in the hands of the Princes. They even settled the place of meeting, at Nürnberg, and Maximilian, full of anger and disgust, hastened off to console himself with hunting in the Tyrol. But the worst was yet to come, when this new Council of Regency at once made a truce with Louis XII, leaving him in possession of Milan.

Finding himself absolutely helpless, the disappointed monarch, quite determined not to submit to the Diet, began to open negotiations on his own account with France. In this he was encouraged by his son Philippe and by the King of Spain, who was already plotting for Naples. It was settled that the infant Prince, Charles of Austria, should be betrothed to Claude, the daughter of Louis XII and Anne de Bretagne ; the French King was to receive the investiture of Milan, and in return was to pay Germany the sum of 80,000 crowns. He was also to give every assistance to Maximilian in his proposed visit to Rome, to be crowned by the Pope, and he promised to join in the projects of a Crusade against the Turks, the object which was always nearest to the heart of the imperial dreamer. But this treaty was in reality a forced concession on either side, and was probably never meant to be carried out in its entirety.

CHAPTER IX

PHILIPPE AND JUANA IN SPAIN

1500—1507

The widowed daughter of Maximilian, Marguerite, marries Philibert II of Savoy—Philippe and Juana visit Spain—Philippe makes an alliance with Louis XII—Maximilian engages in a war of succession in Germany—He has troubles with the Estates—His victory over Guelders—Death of Isabel of Spain, 1504*—Philippe and Juana receive the oaths of allegiance for Castile—Death of the Archduke Philippe—The madness of Queen Juana.*

MEANTIME the widowed Marguerite of Austria had remained in Spain, where she was treated with the utmost kindness and affection by Queen Isabel and her daughters, the youngest of whom, Katharine, was already betrothed to Arthur Prince of Wales. Yet we cannot wonder that the daughter of Maximilian longed for her own country, and that she gladly returned home early in 1500, to take up her abode at the Court of her brother Philippe. The Emperor was an inveterate match-maker and was soon arranging for her another marriage, which would advance his grandiose schemes.

As he still hoped to conquer Italy some day, it was a matter of importance for him to secure an alliance with Savoy. The reigning Duke, Philibert II le Beau, had already fought by his side in the war against Florence in 1497, and distinguished himself as a gallant soldier. It was altogether a most suitable alliance, and the marriage contract was signed at Brussels on September 26, 1500. By this time Marguerite must have become quite accustomed to wedding journeys, but this one, from the Netherlands to Savoy, was on a splendid scale and quite a triumphal progress. Duke Philibert had sent a company of two hundred and fifty knights to fetch his bride, and a gallant show of Flemish nobles were to accompany her as far as Geneva. The old chroniclers give a minute account of her eventful journey; how the Court ladies joined her at Crécy, how she was welcomed and entertained at every city through which she passed, and the splendid presents she received.[1] Not until she had ascended the pine-clad slopes and crossed the snowy ridge of the Jura, did the Princess at length meet her bridegroom: "Monseigneur Philibert de Savoie, fort et puissant et beau, grand personnage et jeune." We will leave her to the endless wedding festivities and to the enjoyment of her brief married happiness, while we return to events still more closely connected with the history of Maximilian and the success of his ambitious hopes.

The marriage of his son the Archduke Philippe with Juana, daughter of Ferdinand and Isabel, had proved a supreme triumph of diplomacy, for, as we have already seen, by a series of premature deaths, this lady had become heiress of Aragon and Castile and all the rich possessions of the New World. After the birth of their son Charles, it had become necessary for Juana and Philippe to visit Spain in order that they might receive the oath of allegiance from their future subjects, as heirs to the throne. Their marriage had not been a happy one from the first, for the young Archduke was not attracted by his Spanish bride, who was somewhat plain and of uncertain temper, and he appears to have early given her cause for jealousy. It is possible that at this time poor Juana had already shown signs of the coming insanity which was to darken so many years of her life.

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[1] See "Marguerite of Austria," pp. 82-87 (Christopher Hare).

After much delay, Philippe was at length induced to set forth with his wife, in October 1501, and as there was peace with France at the moment, they were able to take the journey by land, passing through Brabant and Hainault, resting at Mons and Cambray, and passing the frontier into France at St. Quentin, where they were hospitably received. At Compiègne, they stayed in the ancient castle of Charles the Bold of Burgundy, continuing their journey the next day through the famous forest. From St. Denis they made a state entrance into Paris, where they were welcomed with suitable honours, but they did not meet the French King until their arrival at his Court in Blois, on December 12. Magnificent entertainments were here given in their honour; there was hunting and hawking for the young Archduke, and Louis XII also played the "jeu de paume" with him, and they both showed forth their valour in a tournament. At the same time they discussed politics, and renewed the arrangement by which the baby Charles of Austria was to marry the Princess Claude of France, of about the same age. Anne de Bretagne had set her heart upon this match, which, like so many other matrimonial plans, never came to pass.

Juana and her husband reached Navarre in January, and continued their journey to Bayonne through heavy snowstorms, crossing the mountains with much difficulty in bitter wintry weather. Passing on through Vitoria, they rested for a time at Burgos as guests of the Constable of Castile; they continued their travels by Valladolid, Medina de Campo, and Segovia, until at length they reached Madrid on March 3, hailed everywhere with enthusiasm by the people. The illness of the Archduke caused some delay, but at length came the journey's end at Toledo and the meeting with King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. Great festivities were prepared, but the next day the Court had to go into mourning for the death of Arthur, the eldest son of Henry VII, who had married Katharine of Aragon.

It was not until later that the oaths of allegiance to their future sovereigns were taken by the Cortes, both at Toledo and at Zaragossa, and Philippe, who was tired of the stately and ceremonious Spanish etiquette, declared his intention of returning home before the end of the year. Most unwillingly Juana had to be left behind, as she was expecting a child—Ferdinand, her second son, was born in the following March, 1503. After his birth her mind gave way, she was subject to sudden attacks, "which made her seem like one distraught" if she were opposed in any way, and her condition was a source of great anxiety to her mother.

Meantime the Archduke had returned through France and concluded a peace with Louis XII, to the great annoyance of Ferdinand, as the victories of the Great Captain had almost conquered the whole kingdom of Naples for him, and he suffered the war to continue in Italy, until the whole kingdom of Naples had become a Spanish province.

Meanwhile Maximilian was at open war with the Estates, denounced Berthold of Mainz as a traitor, and tried to raise an army, in the old-fashioned way, by calling upon each prince to send his vassals. In the struggle which ensued, there was almost a state of anarchy in the realm, and in the end the Emperor found that he could not assert his prerogative, but must bide his time and win by diplomacy. After one more vain attempt to recover the Duchy of Guelders from Charles of Egmont, Maximilian undertook another war, in the very heart of Germany, which concerned him still more nearly.

The death of George the Rich, Duke of Bavaria-Landshut, December 1503, had been followed by a disputed succession. According to the law of the Empire and a family agreement, Albert IV of Munich and his brother Wolfgang were the heirs, but the old Duke left his estates to his daughter Elizabeth, wife of Rupert, a son of the Elector Palatine, who at once took possession. Maximilian was called in as mediator, and he decided in favour of Albert Duke of Bavaria, who had married his sister Kunigonda[1] in 1487. However, he first offered Rupert a third of his father-in-law's possessions, but this being refused, he took the field at the head of a strong army, being joined by Wurtemberg, Brunswick, Hesse, and the troops of the Swabian League. The sudden death of Rupert, and later of his wife, did not end the war, as the Elector Palatine continued to fight for his grandsons.

An important battle took place near Regensburg, where the Emperor greatly distinguished himself by his splendid courage; he led his right wing to the charge, and drove the Bohemian mercenaries of the Elector back to their camp, which they had built up with baggage waggons. A desperate rally drove back the attacking party, and Maximilian was surrounded and dragged from his horse by the Bohemians with the long grappling-hooks fastened to their lances. All hope seemed lost, when Eric of Brunswick dashed to his rescue and scattered his foes. The gallant monarch then rallied his troops and led them on to victory, inflicting heavy loss upon the Bohemians. He carried on his success by the siege of Kufstein, where his heavy artillery achieved an easy victory, and soon after the campaign came to an end. The Empire received a share of the spoils; Hagenau and the Ortenau from the Palatine, Kuffstein, Ractenberg and other lordships from Bavaria, the most valuable being the Zillerthal, which formed a strong frontier to the north-east of the Tyrol.

The success of Maximilian had given him great renown, and his position became still more firm by the death of his old opponent Berthold of Mainz in the winter of 1504, especially as the new Elector was a cousin of his own. He now looked forward to his coronation at Rome and the realisation of his dream of a united Crusade against the Turk. With the help of his son Philippe, he won a decisive victory the next summer over Charles of Guelders, took possession of Hattem, and then made a most satisfactory truce of two years. The victorious Princes entered Cologne in triumph, in the parti-coloured costume of Landsknechte, with their eighteen-foot spears over their shoulders; they then gave a banquet attended by more than a thousand of the nobles and knights of Germany.

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[1] Died 1520.

Meanwhile Juana had remained in Spain, against her will, for more than a year after the birth of her second son, full of bitter lamentation and complaint of her husband's absence. It was not till the summer of 1505 that her parents were compelled to suffer her return by sea to the Netherlands. Here a daughter was born to her in September of the following year, and two months later she insisted upon accompanying the Archduke, who was compelled to visit Spain for the purpose of asserting his rights, which were in danger since the death of Queen Isabel (November 26, 1504), who had left Juana Queen of Castile, Leon, Granada, etc. The Flemish fleet met with such terrible gales that the royal party was driven on to the English coast at Weymouth. Henry VII, for whom this was a stroke of fortune, received them almost as State prisoners, for they were not allowed to depart until Philippe had signed a treaty greatly to the advantage of the English King. They then continued their journey and found Ferdinand, who had recently married Germaine de Foix, openly hostile to their claims, although the great nobles of Castile hastened to do homage to their Queen Juana.

Philippe was much troubled by the news that the King of France, notwithstanding his recent promises, was helping Charles of Guelders with men and money, and he at once wrote a manly letter of complaint to Cardinal George d'Amboise, Legate in France, in which he expresses his amazement that King Louis should take the side of his enemies, and can scarcely believe that the report is true. Then he continues: "All the same, if the treaty with me has been broken, do not doubt that I have so cowardly a heart, nor are my parents and possessions in this world so small, that I will not employ them and my life itself, before allowing myself to be thus outraged in a matter where my rights are so good as in this one. . . . I protest here and before God that it will be in spite of myself and against my will, if I have to make war against the King of France, and if it come to pass, all the evils which ensue to Christendom I lay on his conscience . . . and farewell, my good cousin and true friend, to whom I pray that God may grant your desires.

"Written in my city of Valladolid, July 24, 1506."[1]

The Cardinal d'Amboise answers with a kind of proud apology for the policy of France, and strongly advises the King of Castile to avoid war with France if possible. There is more correspondence, and we have an interesting allusion to Robert de la Marck, who has sent to defy the men of Cranendonck: "He has never been denied justice; it would seem by his behaviour that he only seeks for plunder."

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[1] "Lettres de Louis XII," vol. i. p. 66.

At length King Ferdinand had come to a definite agreement with his son-in-law, and having settled matters to his satisfaction, set off in great state for Naples with his young wife, on September 4, 1506. Philippe was strongly opposed to the cruel persecution which the Inquisition had carried on both at Granada and Cordova, and he had deposed the Grand Inquisitor Deza and the fanatical Lucero. Later in September, when he was taken suddenly ill with a mysterious complaint at Burgos, poison was at once suspected, either from the ill-will of the Inquisition or of Ferdinand. But of this we have no proof, and the popular theory is that the Austrian Prince drank cold water when over-heated in "le jeu de paume."

On September 25, 1506, he passed away at the age of twenty-eight years and three months, to the frantic despair of his wife. She refused to be parted from the coffin which contained his remains, and would only travel by night, in sad and slow procession, to the burial. Her unfortunate mental condition was past all doubt: she obstinately refused to sign any papers or to listen to any persuasion. When her father returned to Spain, he announced that she had resigned the government to him, and thus became absolute master of the kingdom, nominally as Regent for his grandson Charles. The rest of the life of this unfortunate lady was one long tragedy. Four months later, January 14, 1507, a fourth daughter was born to her, Catalina, who was suffered to grow up in the gloom of her poor mother's prison-palace of Tordesillas.

The faithful chronicler of the House of Burgundy, gives a most pathetic account of the solemn funeral service in memory of the young Archduke, held at Malines on Sunday, July 18, 1507. To the Emperor Maximilian the death of his only son, on whom all his hopes were fixed, was a terrible blow, and his loss was greatly felt throughout the hereditary lands of Burgundy. All the people of Malines came forth to do honour to their dead lord—the city guilds, the deputies of the States, the officers, the priests, the chaplains ; high and low, with their myriad of crosses, of banners, of flaring torches, join in the great procession and throng into the ancient Church of Saint Rombault. Then follow the Princes, the ambassadors, the Bishops, the great lords and the knights of the land ; led by gorgeous heralds, in various coats-of-arms, on splendid war-horses, bearing emblazoned banners of Hapsburg and Burgundy, and all the broad lands of the dead Philippe.

Within the magnificent church the central figure was the seven-year-old Charles, the heir of his father's vast possessions, who sat facing the carved pulpit, while to him was addressed the funeral oration. Then at the end of the High Mass, when the Bishop spoke the words " Et verbum caro factum est " all the heralds cast down their banners and laid them prostrate on the marble floor in front of the high altar. Next King-at-Arms of the Golden Fleece threw down his staff of office, with the thrice-repeated cry: "Le roi est mort."

After a brief interval of silence he raised his staff on high, proclaiming aloud: "Vive don Charles par la grâce de Dieu archiduc d'Autriche, prince des Espagnes," etc. Now, one by one, the heralds raised their banners from the ground, each one in turn crying aloud some fresh title of that stately roll-call. "Toison d'Or" now took the great sword from the altar, and held it before the Archduke Charles, with the words: "Imperial and royal Prince, this sword of justice is given to you from God and your noble ancestors, that you may protect the Most Holy Faith and all your Kingdoms. . . ." He kissed the sword before giving it into the hands of the little Prince, who took it by the hilt, holding up the point, and so went forward to kneel at the high altar. Thus did Charles V enter upon his vast inheritance, a burden bravely and nobly borne through long years of conflict and struggle, but which in the far-off days to come the great Emperor, on whose dominions the sun never set, would be thankful to lay down, and seek the peaceful refuge of a hermit's cell.

CHAPTER X

TROUBLES OF MAXIMILIAN—HISTORY OF GUELDERLAND

1507

Fresh troubles for Maximilian after the death of his son—Hostility of Europe—The Netherlands oppose his claim to the Regency—War with Guelders—History of the House of Guelders from 1471, *when Duke Arnold sold his State to Charles of Burgundy, against the will of his son Adolf and his people—Irrepressible valour of Charles of Guelders—Always assisted by France.*

AFTER the death of his son Philippe of Castile, Maximilian found himself involved in fresh troubles and responsibilities. The Estates of the Netherlands at first refused to allow his claim to the Regency on behalf of his grandson Charles, who was barely six years old, and they were encouraged by King Louis XII to form a Council of Regency. But the Electors were so much alarmed by internal troubles and the threatening attitude of foreign Powers that they at length submitted reluctantly to admit the claims of Maximilian.

On every side the country was hemmed in by foes, for all the important kingdoms of Europe combined in hostility against the House of Hapsburg. Thus Henry VII of England, Louis XII of France, Ferdinand of Spain, Pope Julius II in Rome, were only awaiting their opportunity to strike an overwhelming blow. But nearest and most urgent of internal dangers was that from the active enmity of Charles Egmond, self-styled Duke of Guelders. This restless and unceasing contest is so constantly referred to in this history, that it will be desirable to give a full account of the position of this rebellious State, and the circumstances which had so long made it a thorn in the side of Maximilian.

The House of Guelders had been famous for its dynastic quarrels during several generations, but we will only go back to the year 1471 when Arnold, Duke of Guelders, pledged his duchy to Charles of Burgundy, in defiance of the laws of his land and the wishes of his people, who were in a state of open rebellion against him, assisted by his son Adolf. He received 300,000 Rhenish florins from the Duke of Burgundy, who had not long to bide his time, for Arnold of Guelders died two years later, and there was no force sufficient to oppose the powerful Charles the Bold, who seized Guelders by force of arms and governed it with the same stern rule as his other dominions. Adolf of Guelders was taken prisoner, but was set free on the death of Charles, and fell at Tournay, fighting for his daughter Marie of Burgundy. As a matter of precaution the grandchildren of Arnold—the young Charles and his sister Philippa—were kept in a kind of honourable captivity at the Court of Burgundy. We are told that the children were present at the wedding of Maximilian with the Princess Marie of Burgundy, and that they bore torches before the bride in the marriage procession.

As the boy Charles grew older, he received his first military training amongst the soldiers of the Archduke, until the day when he was taken prisoner by Louis XII at Bethune. The crafty King of France treated the lad with the utmost kindness, and in the year 1492, when the cities of Guelderland eagerly paid the ransom demanded, set him free and gave him armed support to recover the lands of his ancestors. A handsome, gallant young prince, he was received with enthusiasm by the people of Guelderland, a hardy and warlike race, who were only awaiting their opportunity to free themselves from the alien rule of Burgundy, now in the hands of Maximilian. We can only marvel at the long and successful struggle of this small Northern State, which thus dared to defy the powerful House of Hapsburg in defence of its independence. But we must bear in mind that the chief efforts of the Austrian Archduke, especially after his election as King of the Romans, were directed against Italy and France; also that young Charles of Guelders could always rely upon help from Louis XII, either given in secret or openly.

It would be too long to tell the whole story of this internecine war, which went on for some time before 1497, when a truce was concluded, but was soon broken by the impetuous Charles, and Maximilian took the field in person and gained a temporary success. After the treaty with France in 1501, which was to be sealed by the marriage of the infant Charles with the daughter of Louis XII, the Archduke again renewed his attempt to recover the duchy of Guelders, which would now lose the assistance of a French ally.

But the gallant young Charles of Guelders fought with desperate courage and skill, warmly supported by his subjects, until Maximilian was obliged to turn his attention to another war which was still more important to his interests, when George the Rich, Duke of Bavaria-Landshut, died, and left a will which was fiercely contested by fire and sword. Here the Hapsburg sovereign displayed splendid courage and energy, and the inheritance of Duke George was divided according to the decision of Maximilian, in favour of the husband of his sister Kunigonda.

In the year 1503, it was Philippe, now King of Castile, on whom devolved the duty of holding his own in Guelderland, and he consented to make a compromise at Rosendal, by which Charles of Guelders was to be left in possession of the Nymwegen and Roermonde districts, surrendering the remainder of the duchy to Philippe. The ambitious young prince does not seem to have felt himself bound in any way by this treaty, and he soon set to work to recover his dominions. We hear of him again in the spring of 1504, in connection with the fugitive Earl of Suffolk, Edmund de la Pole, styled the "White Rose" of England, who had escaped from England, but was in sore danger of being kept as a hostage by any foreign prince who gave him shelter for a time. Thus when Suffolk hoped to get assistance from Duke George of Saxony, he applied to Charles of Guelders for a passport to pass through his country to Friesland, having been allowed to leave Aachen by making his brother Richard there responsible for his debts. But the Duke of Guelders had his own game to play, for Suffolk might be a useful pawn in winning help from Henry VII against Philippe of Castile, so, in spite of his safe-conduct, the unfortunate Suffolk was arrested and shut up in the Castle of Hattem.

But it so chanced that when in July 1505 the King of Castile captured Hattem and Zutphen, he also seized the English pretender. Yet as Philippe was at that moment having money advanced him by King Henry, he could not well protect the fugitive, so he suffered him to escape to Wageningen, which belonged to Guelders, but as soon as Philippe had received the last instalment of English money, he shut up Suffolk in the citadel of Namur. When the King of Castile was driven by tempest on the English coast, early the following year, 1506, he was compelled to give up his hostage to Henry VII, who promised to spare his life.[1]

After the death of Philippe, Charles Duke of Guelders continued to give constant worry and anxiety to the new Regent; and, as we shall see, he had this great advantage over the Princess Marguerite, inasmuch as she could not often carry out bold measures, for she had to consult her father and her generals at every step; while the Duke Charles, being his own master, was free to act with prompt decision when any delay or hesitation might have proved fatal. It will be well to give a broad outline of the subsequent career of this brave and ambitious young Duke of Guelders, as it will make the story more simple to follow although we may have to allude again to certain events in following the later reign of Marguerite Duchess of Savoy as Regent of the Netherlands.

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[1] Suffolk was beheaded on April 30, 1513.

One of the most important of Duke Charles's strongholds was the fortress of Pouderoyen, which was well fortified, situated on the frontier of Brabant and Holland, not far from the river Meuse, and placed most conveniently for frequent border raids into the neighbouring countries. It has been said by his enemies that this young captain was in the habit of fighting more like a brigand than a prince. But in those days the terms may almost be said to have been interchangeable.

We have already seen, by the efforts made at various times in the Diets of the Empire, in the struggle to secure the Landfriede (Public Peace), how difficult it was to check private war between neighbouring lords, in the absence of any power strong enough to restrain those turbulent knights. The robber lords waylaid the merchants travelling near their strongholds, and even the great princes were quite willing to support such lawlessness. All travel was absolutely unsafe in the earlier days of Maximilian's reign, and we cannot fail to remember the relentless manner in which unpaid mercenaries lived everywhere by pillage and highway robbery. In short we cannot see that Charles of Guelders differed much in this respect from other rulers of the land.

In the year 1507 a desperate attack was made upon the great military centre of Guelderland, the Castle of Pouderoyen. Count Jean of Egmond, the chief captain of the Regent of the Netherlands, collected the fighting men of Holland and Bois-le-duc under his command, and, with the addition of four hundred paid mercenaries, he laid siege to the stronghold. A blockhouse was built before the besieged town and all communications were cut off; but the garrison was fortunate in having for commander a gallant old soldier, Henri Ens, better known as Suydewint, who was more than a match both in craft and valour for the besiegers. Time passed on and he defied all their attacks until the young Duke of Guelders was able to come to the assistance of Pouderoyen and the siege was raised. There was a report that the men of Holland ran away in cowardly fashion, and the Regent was very indignant when she heard of this repulse. She wrote to her general:

"It is of course true that we must sometime meet with misfortune, but it seems to me that we endure it more often by our own fault than by Divine Will."

Later on this same fortress of Pouderoyen was besieged once more by Rodolph Prince of Anhalt, who came with a large army and was able to invest the place so completely that the garrison were compelled by famine to surrender, and unfortunately their brave captain, Suydewint, was crushed to death by a falling beam. But nothing more happened in any way commensurate with Anhalt's vast preparations, for although he had received orders to ravage all Guelderland with two thousand foot-soldiers of Bois-le-duc, we are told that all the "piétons" returned home without fighting!

As Captain-General of the Netherlands for Maximilian, Prince Rodolph was to receive a hundred golden florins of twenty-eight sous each week; he had twenty-four fighting men on horseback and fourteen "hallebardiers" for his guard, besides chariots for transport of tents, baggage, provisions, and ammunition. We wonder whether he was better paid than his soldiers, who undoubtedly deserted for want of money and food. This was always the great difficulty with Maximilian, who, with all his vast schemes of conquest, was always so terribly short of money. We have seen how reluctant the States were to vote him any subsidies; even the small sums promised, hardly ever reached the sovereign until too late, and the letters of the Regent Marguerite to her father are one long lamentation concerning the sufferings of her army.

Here are a few instances. The garrison of Tiel in December 1507 implore the Regent to pay them that which is owing, as, for the most part, the men have no coat or doublet or shirt on their backs, and have nothing to eat. If cloth is sent them and payment for a fortnight, they will have patience a little longer, otherwise they must give up the city for want of the necessaries of life. Breda makes the same appeal through Henry of Nassau. The Prince of Anhalt had already written from the camp before Pouderoyen in the same strain.

Florent of Egmond sends word that the garrison of Arnheim threaten to surrender the city:

"Madame . . . the Captains have come to tell me finally and positively that they cannot hold out; they are in such great necessity and have suffered so much, that if money be not sent within fourteen days, they will leave the town . . . but I do not know where to find even a hundred florins, by credit or otherwise . . . and for want of pay, they will abandon the city. . . ."

The rebel Duke Charles had his own troubles, but he was rather more fortunate, for his men were fighting for their country and could not have been quite so destitute, as they were amongst their own people. They are reported to have said that they would rather fight without pay for their Duke, than receive money to take the side of Burgundy.

When the Peace of Cambray was signed on December 10, 1508, it was decided, with regard to the duchy of Guelders, that with the county of Zutphen it should remain under the rule of Charles of Egmond for the present; he was to make restitution of all the places he had taken in Holland, while in return he was to receive back the fortresses which he had lost in Guelderland. But Charles, the irrepressible, was not one to be bound by any contract. At the very time of signing this one he was at open strife with his neighbour, the warlike Bishop of Utrecht. The Duke of Guelders had sent a strong company of his men in boats to take possession of the prelate's house "Kuinder," in a harbour of the sea near Holland and Friesland, in a commanding position, for the merchant traffic was compelled to pass by that way. Indeed this "Kuinder" was looked upon as the key of the situation, and it was a proud moment for Duke Charles when his soldiers seized the stronghold, and fortified it still more with bulwarks, after pillaging the whole place and taking the Bishop's men prisoners.

Not content with this act of aggression, Charles of

Egmond was giving trouble again the next year, and Maximilian urges the Regent to send her Maître d'hôtel, Jérome Vent, to remonstrate with the aggressor and persuade him to keep the peace, according to his sworn undertaking. But soft words did not succeed better than hard blows, and in March, 1509, we find that Charles has taken the church of Barneveld and is making a fortified place of it, thus putting the holy edifice to a sacrilegious use. This was apparently the last straw, for the King of the Romans now uses very strong language in his letter to his daughter.

" . . . certain devils believe that I am breaking the peace while their beloved idol, the aforesaid Charles of Egmond, is only too anxious to keep it. Ah! I will revenge myself upon this traitor because he has so villainously broken the peace, and turns us into ridicule. But I promise you upon my faith, that I will soon show by the help of God, to our aforesaid traitors, liars, rebels, such a lesson and punishment when I meet them, that for a year after, they will not save their tongues or their ears. . . ."

No result followed all his angry and bombastic language. Charles of Guelders seemed to be more prosperous than ever, although the young heir to the English throne, Henry VIII, had sent Maximilian, the previous year, 1,500 archers to help in the war against Guelderland. The war went smouldering on for many months, breaking out in one place after another, in bold defiance of all treaties.

At length, in the beginning of the year 1510, some one makes a most amazing suggestion, which Maximilian appears to take quite seriously. If peace cannot be obtained by fighting, why not try a peaceful alliance, and sacrifice one of the granddaughters of the King of the Romans as a bride for this unconquerable brigand prince? It was the Princess Isabelle, the second daughter of Philippe of Castile and his wife Juana, then barely nine years old, who appears to have been selected. A great deal of correspondence followed on the subject, and there were most complicated negotiations; for neither side had any confidence in the other.

These were some of the conditions. Isabelle being a minor, the betrothal was to be only by word of mouth. If it were broken off after this, the forfeit was to be a fine of 200,000 gold florins of the Rhine. The young bride was to be taken under strong escort to Bois-le-duc, where she was to be received by the deputies of the States of Guelders, as "dame héritière du pays." After this ceremony the Princess was to return to the care of her aunt, the Regent of the Netherlands, until she should attain the age of sixteen, when the marriage would be carried out. Then follows a long list of the fortresses to be given up on each side, and all kinds of minute details as to the pension Charles of Guelders is to receive, and, amongst other things, how the duchy of Guelders and the county of Zutphen are to revert to Maximilian if Isabelle dies without leaving a male heir.

But it is needless to enumerate all the clauses of the treaty, as, after lingering on for months, the whole matter was abruptly broken off before the end of the year, during which time hostilities had been going on much as usual. The Bishop of Utrecht, whose unfortunate proximity to the restless and war-loving Charles made him the easiest point of attack, has to be helped with an armed force, while he, poor man, has to raise five hundred horsemen and fifteen hundred foot-soldiers to repair the fortifications of the frontier and to guard the approaches of the Rhine, so that the passage may be kept open. It is very doubtful how far the Duke of Guelders took this marriage scheme seriously, for he stoutly refused to humiliate himself so far as even to pay homage to Maximilian.

Certainly the idea of rewarding the rebel prince with a bride of the House of Hapsburg almost became an international scandal. Even Frederick of Egmond, father of Maximilian's general, Florent of Egmond, and head of the family, wrote that he could not have a treaty of that sort made with his kinsman, and absolutely refused his consent. If the Regent persisted in such intentions, would she release him from his oath of allegiance and suffer him to save his own honour and estates? Then Ferdinand, King of Aragon, expresses his indignation, and adds that in all that concerns the children of his daughter Juana, he has the first right to be consulted. Lastly Henry VIII is very much annoyed and expresses his strong objections, for the young Isabelle is a niece of his wife Katharine of Aragon. Most diplomatic apologies and many explanations have to be offered before there is calm once more on the troubled waters.

Meantime Charles of Guelders continues his constant policy of aggression. It seems difficult for us to understand how such a small State can steadily resist, during long years, a powerful prince like Maximilian. But, in fact, he was too much absorbed in his foreign wars to assemble and lead a sufficient force to conquer Guelderland, once for all, and thus put an end to this ceaseless, irritating petty war. So it dragged on, and occasionally the Emperor was very much annoyed when his advice was not taken. Thus with regard to the siege of Venloo in 1511, he had suggested that a blockhouse should be built at Wageningen to isolate the city and prevent the arrival of help and supplies. But the Flemish general and the English captain, "Edoart Poining," preferred to batter the walls for three days and then attempt to take Venloo by assault; upon which they were driven back with great loss. Maximilian, on hearing of this, makes the pious remark that we must take the fortune of war as God sends it, but regrets that his advice was not taken, "as we know some little about such affairs."

So Charles continues his turbulent career, with varying fortune. He may be placed under the Ban of the Empire, or the Pope may pronounce an interdict against him, but, although he is a zealous Catholic, nothing seems to trouble him much. In 1519, the year of the Emperor's death, he is sufficiently prosperous to marry, with much pomp, the daughter of the Duke of Luneburg; while in spite of every treaty, he can usually depend upon the help of the King of France. So he goes on his way, full of courage and ambition until the end of his days in 1538, and I cannot do better than quote as his epitaph the words of a French historian:

"Homme astucieux, fécond en ressources, souvent vaincu mais jamais abattu par les revers, et qui, après chaque défaite, se relève par son génie au dessus des coups de la fortune."

CHAPTER XI

MARGUERITE APPOINTED REGENT OF THE NETHERLANDS

1502—1509

Marguerite in Savoy—Death of her husband, Philibert II, Duke of Savoy—She is appointed Regent of the Netherlands, and has the care of the children of Philippe—Maximilian assumes the imperial title (Emperor-Elect) at Trent, with consent of the Pope, 1508—*War against Venice—League of Cambray—Battle of Agnadello,* 1509—*Defeat of Venice.*

IN an earlier chapter, we followed the Princess Marguerite, daughter of Maximilian, on her third marriage venture, to the fair land of Savoy. After all her sad experience of life and adventure, she was barely two-and-twenty years old when, in January 1502, she became the wife of a young prince of her own age, Philibert II le Beau, Duke of Savoy. He was already well known as a gallant and successful captain, having served in the army of Maximilian during the war against Florence, as far back as 1497. His mother, Marguerite de Bourbon, who had died in his early childhood, was sister-in-law of the great Anne de Beaujeu, by whom his sister Louise (mother of François I) was brought up and married to the Duc d'Angoulême. Philibert also received his early education at the Court of the Regent of France, and it is quite possible that he may have already met his future bride in the pleasant gardens of Amboise, as a "douce et naïve enfant."

That delightful old chronicler, Jehan le Maire, cannot say enough in praise of the young Duke of Savoy.

"A prince flourishing in his youth, distinguished for his strength and beauty, abounding in possessions, reposing in the peaceful tranquillity of his realm, feared by his enemies, honoured by his friends, loved and served by all his loyal subjects, and to whom for the height of his great felicity, so richly favoured by the gods, for three years there was sent to him as wife and companion a precious celestial flower named Marguerite; the most illustrious lady in the world, be it ever so great in its circumference; most worthy daughter of the Majesty Cæsar Augustine of the most invincible King Maximilian, Moderator of the imperial sceptre of the Romans."

He was a wise ruler, for while there was war on every side of him, he spared his people the horrors of being invaded and overrun by foreign mercenaries, proclaiming the neutrality of Savoy. He was courted alike by France and Austria, and obtained good training for his soldiers by allowing them to serve for pay on either side; a curious plan which appears to have been quite approved of in those days. Philibert received Louis XII with princely hospitality at Turin, while at the same time Maximilian was entirely friendly to the young Duke, and confirmed him in his possession of the lands granted to his ancestors by Charles IV. When the

French army passed through Savoy, the thrifty peasants sold them provisions and forage at a good price, while the French King found it worth his while to pay 30,000 livres a month for the neutrality of the ruler.

Philibert also had the honour of being appointed Imperial Vicar for Italy. He showed broad toleration in advance of his age, by encouraging the Jews to take up their abode, and even be treated with justice, in his dominions. He deserved well of his subjects, for he carried out useful reforms in his government, and joined with his wife in eager schemes for the founding of schools and hospitals. There was another great work which they proposed to carry out together. The mother of the Duke, Marguerite de Bourbon, had vowed to build a stately sepulchral church at Brou, near Bourg-en-Bresse; but she died in 1483, before she could carry out her purpose, and had bequeathed it as a legacy to her infant son. However, in the days to come, it was on Marguerite that devolved by tragic misfortune the carrying out of the solemn vow, and the building of that beautiful church which has been an enduring treasure for so many pilgrims.

Philibert was a passionate lover of hunting, and one day in September 1504, he went forth on a sultry morning to chase the wild boar. He rode through the thick woods, he crossed the deep valleys and climbed the mountains in pursuit, until the boar which he was pursuing crossed the Albarine, and the hunter, in his eagerness, sprang from his horse and pursued the fierce animal on foot. Overcome with fatigue, weary and thirsty, the young prince drank freely of a fountain by the wayside and threw himself on the grass in utter exhaustion. Overheated by the chase, he took a chill, which was followed by fever, and notwithstanding the devoted care and love of his wife, Philibert died on September 10, 1504, in the room where he was born at Pont d'Ain. His reign had lasted but seven years, and his happy married life barely three. The story of his last fatal hunting expedition, and of his lamented death, is told in quaint allegorical fashion by Jehan le Maire, who dwells upon the devotion of the Princess Marguerite, her vows and prayers for her husband's life, and, finally, of her utter desolation.

After she had outlived the first crushing agony of loss, the young widow set herself to carry out the vow of Marguerite de Bourbon, by building the splendid memorial church at Brou, a work which was continued for twenty-five years, at immense cost, with the help of all the most famous architects and sculptors in Europe. But she was not destined long to watch it rising in beauty from the ground, for after the death of her brother Philippe, she was summoned back to her native land, to govern as Regent for her infant nephew Charles, and to undertake the care of her orphaned nieces.

Maximilian had no desire to live amongst the turbulent burghers who had always defied his authority, and he chose this solution of the difficulty. The selection of his daughter was fully justified, as we shall see in the long years that follow, by her highminded and trustworthy statesmanship as well as by her scrupulous integrity. Of all the period which follows, we have a most full and interesting account in the hundreds of private letters which passed between the imperial father and daughter, and which have been most fortunately preserved to us.

The document which placed Marguerite in the stately position of Governess or Regent of the Netherlands is in this comprehensive style:

"The guardianship, regency, and government of our dear and much-loved children, Charles Archduke of Austria, Prince of Spain . . . and of his brother and sisters; we appoint her administrator of the persons, bodies and goods, lands, lordships and countries of our said children, with full and entire power and authority to do, oversee and accomplish in all things occurring in the said lands . . . as much in point of justice, of favour, and of finances, offices, benefices, confirmations and freedom. . . ."

It may be interesting at this point to define exactly what was meant by the Netherlands at the time when Marguerite Duchess of Savoy began to rule over them. We shall include the whole of the modern kingdoms of Belgium and Holland, with a slight alteration of the frontier towards France. The province of Liège, which is now included in Belgium, was then a half-independent State subject to the Empire. Flanders and Artois were feudally under the rule of France; the Duchy of Brabant, the County of Hainault, the County of Namur, all imperial, were comprised in Belgium. The present kingdom of Holland consists of the county of Holland, the disputed Duchy of Guelders, and the provinces of West Friesland, Groningen, and other smaller territories, while the bishopric of Utrecht was added in 1527. Four distinct languages were spoken in these lands : French, Dutch or Low German, Walloon, and ordinary High German. The whole of these states except Flanders and Artois were part of the ancient Lotharingian kingdom ; a debatable land, the scene of countless dynastic quarrels, and the field of unnumbered fierce battles. Throughout the Middle Ages, each of these small territories had a ruler of its own ; each one enlarged its boundaries in turn by marriage or conquest, or became extinct to receive a new nomination from the Emperor.

These provinces contained an industrious and thriving population with something of a common bond between them, and when they were by slow degrees combined under the sway of Burgundy, they were able to act as a nation, for the mutual interest of the burghers, though these were by no means peaceful subjects of their ruler. The towns of the Netherlands began as centres of population gathered round some feudal castle, or sacred shrine, or most frequently in some situation conveniently adapted for trade. They grew strong under the patronage of their lords, yet in constant strife with them, until they had attained an independence which soon made them all-powerful. Each province had its own Assembly and Estates, the burghers having all the real power of government in their hands.

We can see what a difficult task awaited the Princess Marguerite in ruling these shrewd and determined citizens. The great point in her favour was that, born a Fleming, of the race of their ancient sovereigns, the cities were personally attached to her. Her coming was welcomed with enthusiasm by the people, and her return to Brabant was a triumphal progress. In April 1507 she was proclaimed Governor-General of the Netherlands by the Estates at Louvain, and on July 7 following, she made her formal entry into Malines, and took possession of the stately palace prepared for her.

The care of all her brother's children now devolved upon her, with the exception of the infant Catalina, who was left in Spain with her poor mother Juana, and Ferdinand, the second son, aged four, who was brought up by his grandfather Ferdinand. There was Eleonora, the eldest, now nine years old; Charles, the heir, born on February 24, 1500; Isabelle, born on August 15, 1501; and little Marie, who was not quite two years old. The loving devotion of Marguerite to these children, whom she watched over with more than a mother's tenderness, never failed throughout their chequered lives; although, as we shall see, she had but little voice in the marriages arranged for them later by their grandfather, to carry out the policy of his life.

The tutors appointed by Maximilian for the Archduke Charles were Guillaume de Croy, Lord of Chièvres and Adrian of Utrecht, who was later chosen Pope, as Adrian VI. Under these great men were Louis Vacca and Louis Vivès, distinguished scholars who undertook the practical part of the boy's education. Charles now became the centre around whom all the imperial plans revolved. It was for his sake that Maximilian declared that he must cross the Alps to Italy, and receive the diadem of Empire from the Pope, and for this purpose he required liberal help from the Estates. He demanded an army of 30,000 men, but in fact was only able to raise about 12,000 with great difficulty.

To secure the help or neutrality of Henry VII, he actually conceived the wild plan of marrying his daughter Marguerite to this King, so much older than herself,[1] with the proviso that she should spend four months of the year in her government of the Netherlands. But Marguerite had suffered too much already from her painful experience in France, in Spain, and in Savoy during her short life of twenty-six years, and she firmly refused to be given in marriage again. Her father was compelled to be satisfied with her loyal help and intelligent devotion to his interests, and, with his usual impetuosity, he now prepared for the long-desired journey to Rome, where he was to receive the imperial crown. But disappointment awaited him on every side; the Estates were more unwilling and dilatory than ever in raising the promised troops; the Swiss were bought over by French gold, and Venice refused to allow his passage with an armed force through her dominions.

Confident as ever, he had written to his daughter: "Nous trouverons toujours le chemin de Rome," but in the end he was forced to yield to adverse fate. His army was not strong enough to force a way through unfriendly States, and he resolved to depart from immemorial custom and receive his imperial title in his own city of Trent. On February 4, 1508, he was solemnly proclaimed with great pomp and ceremony in the ancient Cathedral, as "Holy Roman Emperor." It is true that he called himself "Emperor-Elect," but in common usage it was always "Emperor." Pope Julius II was quite willing to agree to this, as the last thing he wished for was the coming of a great German army to Rome. The successors of Maximilian I followed his example—indeed, only his grandson Charles V underwent any form of Papal coronation.

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[1] Henry VII was fifty-two.

But the Venetians were not forgiven for refusing his passage, and the Emperor most unwisely went to war with them, invading their territory from three sides—Vicenza, Friuli, and the Valley of the Adige. He felt so sure of victory that he wrote, on March 1, to the Elector of Saxony:

"The Venetians paint their lion with two feet in the sea, the third on the plains, and the fourth on the mountains. We have nearly won the foot on the mountains, for only one claw is wanting, which with God's help will be ours in eight days, and then we shall conquer the foot on the plains also."

But the fortune of war was against him. His general Trautson fell in battle with the Venetians, who put to the rout his army with great loss. Pitigliano was successful in the domains of Verona, while in the east, Alviano seized Gorz, Trieste, and other hereditary lands of the Hapsburgs, and the fleet of Venice took possession of Fiume and threatened the whole coast. In vain Maximilian made desperate efforts to rouse his people, but only the Tyrolese made any response, and before the end of June he was obliged to conclude a three-years' truce, which left all her conquests in the hands of Venice, with the exception of Adelsberg.

But this success of the great Republic only served to increase the jealousy with which she was looked upon by her neighbours, and this did much to help the Emperor in carrying out the League of Cambray, of which the secret object was the ruin of Venice, although it was ostensibly to settle matters with France and Guelderland. Marguerite and Matthew Lang Bishop of Gurk were appointed by Maximilian to receive the French deputies at Cambray, in December 1508. A temporary settlement was made with Guelderland, where Charles of Egmond continued to give persistent trouble, and then began the real, secret business of the League, which was to include the Emperor, Pope Julius II, France, and Aragon.

George d'Amboise spoke for the French King and made so many difficulties that only the Duchess of Savoy's threat of returning home, brought him to make terms. By their combined action, each of these various powers was to recover the cities they claimed as taken by Venice. The Pope demanded Ravenna, Rimini, Faenza, and other towns of the Romagna; the Emperor desired to recover all the lands taken by Venice in the recent war, adding to these Verona, Treviso, Padua, Vicenza, and Friuli; Spain was to receive the seaports of Apulia, Monopoli, Trani, Brindisi, and Otranto, while France claimed Bergamo, Brescia, Cremona, and the Ghiara d'Adda. The investiture of Milan was also to be given to the French King on payment of 100,000 crowns.

When all this was settled, war was declared by France on April 7, 1509, and a few weeks later Julius II proclaimed the ban of the Church against Venice and its lands. Maximilian was then making a desperate struggle at the Diet of Worms to induce the Estates to provide sufficient men and money. But never did he meet with less success. He was overwhelmed with complaints, the Council broke up in confusion, and the Emperor was compelled to raise money by pledging tolls, mines, and every source of income to pay the troops he had raised.

Meantime Venice had brought together a splendid army of more than 30,000 infantry, with good foreign levies of Stradiots and other horsemen. They began the campaign by capturing and burning Treviglio, but meantime the French had crossed the Adda and taken Rivolta. The first important incident was the battle of Agnadello, 1509, when the French attacked the Venetian army on the march towards Cremona, when they were spread out over four miles of rough ground, and the artillery was not available. The impetuous general Alviano fought with desperate valour, but his company was almost destroyed and he himself was taken prisoner. Pitigliano with his men-at-arms retreated in good order, but the heavy cannon were left behind and the day was lost by Venice (May 14, 1509).

There is a very interesting letter from Maximilian to his daughter, in which he tells the whole story:

"Very dear and much beloved daughter, to-day we have received letters from our brother and cousin, the King of France, by which he writes to us that on the fourteenth of the month he had a battle with our common enemies, the Venetians, and that he has been victorious and won the same, and remains master of the field, having taken prisoner, with several others, the principal chief and captain of the army (Bartolommeo d'Alviano). Our ambassador, Messire André de Burgo, who was present at the battle, writes to us that he has seen quite four thousand dead. By other letters which the Master of the French Posts has written, we learn that there are from ten to twelve thousand dead or taken, and that our aforesaid brother and cousin has gained forty pieces of artillery. We hear also that the strength of the said Venetians in the battle was twenty thousand men and the French a little more. Farewell, my very dear and beloved daughter; may our Lord have you in His keeping.

"Written at Angelberg, the 18th day of May 1509.

"Your good father, MAXIMILIAN."

It is difficult to account for the extraordinary panic which this easy victory of Louis XII caused to the Venetians. Apparently it was not so much the severity of their defeat as the mutinous behaviour of their own militia, who fled and dispersed at once. The Republic yielded all the disputed lands so rapidly that they lost all the advantages they might have gained by skilful negotiation.

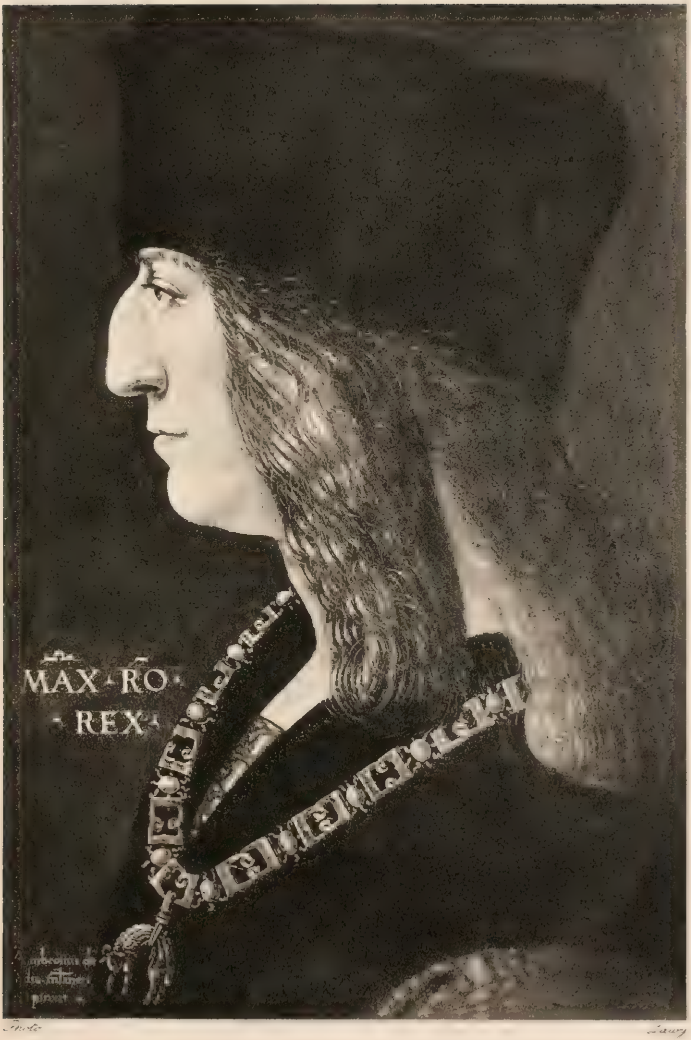

Photo Lowy

Maximilian I.
Holy Roman Emperor.

Ambrogio de Predis

CHAPTER XII

COMING OF HENRY VIII. MAXIMILIAN INVADES ITALY

1509—1511

Death of Henry VII of England, 1509—*Marriage of Henry VIII with Katharine of Aragon—His alliance with Venice—Maximilian invades Italy again; meets with great success—The Pope recovers the cities of Romagna—Maximilian besieges Padua, which Venice had regained—He suddenly raises the siege and returns to Germany (Story of Bayard and the French Lords).*

WHILE the whole continent of Europe was shaken by the storm and stress of war, the old King of England, Henry VII, was slowly passing away from the scene where he had played so eager a part. His death, on April 22 of the year 1509, was a matter of international importance, as the place of the cold and crafty man of wide experience was to be taken by a young prince of barely eighteen, flamboyant in body and mind, whose accession was greeted by his subjects with loud enthusiasm. It may be interesting at this point to quote a few contemporary opinions with regard to Henry VIII. In a letter of William Blount, Lord Mountjoy, to the famous Erasmus, he says:

"I have no fear that when you heard that our prince, now Henry VIII, whom we may well call our Octavius, had succeeded to his father's throne, all your melancholy left you at once. For what may you not promise to yourself from a prince with whose extraordinary and almost divine character you are well acquainted! . . . But when you know what a hero he now shows himself, how wisely he behaves, what a lover he is of justice and goodness, what affection he bears to the learned, I will venture to swear that you will need no wings to fly to behold this new and auspicious star. . . . Avarice is expelled the country, Liberality scatters wealth with a bounteous hand. Our King does not desire gold or gems or precious metals, but virtue, glory, immortality."

The Venetian ambassador describes Henry as "very handsome. Nature could not have done more for him. He is much handsomer than any other sovereign in Christendom. . . . He is very accomplished, a good musician, composes well, is a capital horseman, a fine jouster, speaks French, Latin, and Spanish. . . . He is fond of hunting, and never takes this diversion without tiring nine or ten horses. . . . He is extremely fond of tennis. . . ."

Almost the first step of the young King was to carry out his father's wishes with regard to his marriage with Katharine of Aragon. To this he was most strongly urged by Ferdinand of Spain and by his own Council, who could not bear to lose the gold of the young widow's dowry. He wrote to Marguerite Duchess of Savoy, that he would not disobey his father's commands, strengthened as they were by the dispensation of the Pope, and by the friendship between England and Austria, as his sister Mary was betrothed to Charles her nephew, and also the nephew of Katharine. So the marriage was carried out on June 11, less than two months after his father's death. Then followed the splendid coronation of King and Queen, after which Henry found time from his various amusements, to consider with his Council the part he should play in European policy.

As we have already seen in the last chapter, Pope and Emperor, France and Spain had all raised the hue and cry after Venice; but of all these, Louis XII, the hereditary foe of England, was in a position to profit the most. His recent victory over Venice at Agnadello (May 14, 1508) had secured for him Milan and the territory of Venice as far as the river Mincio; it also threatened Ferdinand's hold of Naples. This was the situation which faced the new King of England, a mere boy who had to hold his own amongst such seasoned intriguers as Ferdinand of Spain, Maximilian of Austria, Louis XII of France, and Pope Julius, each of whom was nearly three times his age. He was indignant to find them all in league against Venice, the unchanging ally of England and the bulwark of Christendom against the Turk. Henry had friends of his own amongst the distinguished scholars of the Republic, her merchants were indispensable to the commerce of London, her galleys called twice a year at Southampton on the way to and from Flanders, and the trade with Venice was most profitable to both countries.

On the day after his coronation, the young King had lamented to the Venetian ambassador the victory of France at Agnadello, and, shortly after, he wrote to remonstrate with the sovereigns of Europe against the injustice of their Venetian crusade. He also commissioned his ambassador at Rome to watch over the interests of Venice as well as those of his own country, and persuaded the Pope to remove the ban of the Church from the Doge and his subjects.

Instead of making war, however, on France, his hereditary foe, his first warlike enterprise was to send 1,500 archers to help in the Netherlands against Guelders, as had been agreed by treaty. He vainly tried to persuade Maximilian to accept arbitration and make peace with his life-long enemy, even although the French King used the familiar argument that all Christendom must unite to turn their arms against the Infidel. He wrote in the same strain to Ferdinand his father-in-law, announcing that he was about to raise an expedition for the destruction of the enemies of the Faith. This, he said that he owed to God for his peaceful accession, while on another occasion he declared "that he cherished, like an heirloom, the ardour against the Infidel which he inherited from his father." It must be added that this generous purpose did not trouble his later life much more than it had done that of the cold Henry VII. It turned out to be only one of those useful diplomatic fictions, by which any sovereign of that time who desired peace could say that it was imperative in order to fight the Turk.

Yet we must do Henry VIII the justice to own that he did raise an expedition for a crusade, which sailed from Plymouth in May 1511, to join in the King of Spain's attack on the Moors. However, it came to no result, for the Christian allies quarrelled soon after landing, and Ferdinand informed the English general that he was about to make peace with the Infidel, as he had a fresh difficulty to settle at home with the King of France.

Meantime we must return to Maximilian and his continued war with Venice. The defeat of Agnadello had been so crushing for the moment that the Rulers of the Republic were willing to make peace almost on any terms. They actually offered the Emperor the restitution of all his lands which they had taken, the imperial suzerainty should be recognised, and a large yearly subsidy should be paid in token of homage. But the ambassadors of Venice were not even allowed to have audience with him, and he refused to listen to any advice. The Republic had offered him a deadly insult in 1507, when she refused his passage through her territory to go to Rome for his coronation, and nothing but her utter ruin would satisfy his vengeance.

It was about midsummer that Maximilian once more opened the campaign in person at the head of 15,000 men. The Venetian army had concentrated in the direction of the French advance, and he met with scarcely any opposition. That which he had refused as a gift he would take as his right, and fortune favoured him at first, for by the middle of July he had regained with but little loss, one after another, all the cities which had been taken from him. It was with the utmost satisfaction that he received the news of the Pope having recovered the cities of Romagna, while the Spanish King had been successful in seizing the ports of Apulia. Full of triumph and exultation, the Emperor laboriously brought his artillery across the Brenner Pass to continue his victorious career, when a sudden change took place.

The Venetian rule was very popular in all the districts conquered, for it was just, and the taxation was lighter than it had ever been before. The towns were therefore loyal to the Republic, and as the Emperor could only spare a small garrison in each place, his tenure was most insecure. Thus the Venetians easily regained Padua, which Maximilian again besieged and did much damage with his heavy artillery, but he was unable to take the city by the most vigorous assaults. At length in October, to the surprise of every one, he suddenly raised the siege and returned hastily to the Tyrol. The Chevalier Bayard was in the French army before Padua, and his faithful chronicler, the "Loyal serviteur," gives such a picturesque and detailed account of this strange incident that it is worthy of quotation.

At the gate of Padua towards Vicenza, the Emperor's artillery had made a great breach in the fortifications, but the Venetians had dug a wide trench behind, which was filled with gunpowder and inflammable materials and could be blown up at a moment's notice. When the Emperor saw this great hole, he expressed his amazement to the noble lords near him that, with so many besiegers, the city had not been taken by assault on this side. When he went back to his tent, having thought over the matter, he sent a letter to the French general, La Palisse, describing the breach and suggesting that the French gentlemen, the men-at-arms, should lead his German foot-soldiers to the assault that very day, as soon as the great drum should sound. To a warrior of Maximilian's spirit and courage, this seemed a very simple matter, for he quite understood that the common soldiers would need to be led in a dangerous enterprise by men of noble race.

La Palisse was much surprised at the letter, but he returned a courteous message, that he would do his best to obey, and then sent for the French captains to his tent. "Gentlemen," he began, "let us dine first, for I have something to say to you which may take away your appetite."

When the meal was over he produced the Emperor's letter and read it twice over that it might be thoroughly understood. The gentlemen all looked at each other with a smile, then the Lord of Ymbercourt said: "My lord, there is no need to consider; tell the Emperor that we are all ready. . . ." To this all agreed, only Bayard had not spoken. Then La Palisse said to him with a smile: "Now, you Hercules of France, what do you say?"

The Good Knight, who loved a joke, replied gaily: "It seems that you are all going straight at the breach, but as it is rather a dull pastime for a man-at-arms to go on foot—many of you are great lords of noble Houses—I would advise you, my Lord of La Palisse, to send word to the Emperor that you have consulted with your captains as he requested, and they are quite willing to obey you, but, as they are all gentlemen, to mix them up with foot-soldiers of low estate is showing them small respect. He has many counts, lords, and gentlemen of Germany;

let him place them on foot with us French men-at-arms to make the assault, and then his Landsknechte can follow, if they care to."

The Good Knight's opinion was considered most wise, and his message was sent to the Emperor, who thought it very fair and reasonable, for he had a high sense of honour. So he caused his drums and trumpets to summon all the princes, lords, and captains of Germany, Burgundy, and Hainault. When they were all assembled in his presence, Maximilian told them that he proposed within an hour to make an assault upon the city, of which he had already told the French gentlemen, who were all anxious to do their duty, and who begged that the gentlemen of Germany would go with them and follow where they showed the way. "Therefore, gentlemen," he added, "I earnestly pray that you will accompany them to the breach and go on foot with them; and I hope by the help of God that the first assault will deliver the enemy into our hands."

When the Emperor had finished his speech a sudden strange and wonderful noise arose amongst the Germans, and lasted for the space of half an hour. Then one of them, who was charged to speak for all, replied that they were not the sort of people who would go on foot, or who would go thus to a breach, but that their real condition was to fight like gentlemen on horseback. No other answer could Maximilian obtain, yet, however much it displeased him, he gave no sign, but simply said: "Well, my lords, we must consider what is best to be done."

Then he immediately called a gentleman of his guard and said to him: "Go to the tent of my cousin, the Lord of La Palisse; commend me to him and to all the French lords . . . and tell them that the assault will not be made to-day."

The chronicler adds:

"I do not know how it was, but the night after this happened, the Emperor went off suddenly about forty miles from the camp, and from thence ordered his people to raise the siege."[1]

This is a striking instance of Maximilian's quick, impetuous temper, which made him yield to a sudden impulse, regardless of consequences. It was a fatal step, for his retreat to the Tyrol did much towards breaking up the League against Venice, who gradually regained all that she had lost. During the siege, Marguerite had received frequent letters from her father, and he tries to explain his retreat by the great strength of the garrison, their powerful artillery, but above all he alludes to the want of spirit and enterprise amongst his own followers, of which the chronicler of Bayard gives so vivid an example. Yet he had not given up all hope of ultimate success, for he ends his letter: "By the help of God . . . we will constrain them to render us obedience."

Unfortunately for Maximilian, the Pope had changed his policy. He had obtained all that he desired, and on February 1510 he came to terms with Venice, who consented to yield him all ecclesiastical rights, free navigation in the Adriatic, and everything else that he demanded. The next object of Julius II was to expel the "barbarians" from Italy, and for this purpose, he concluded a league for five years with the Swiss, who had hitherto given valuable aid to France. He also looked for help from England and the Emperor, who was, however, more bitter than ever against the Republic. He had spent his treasures on the war, he had borrowed large sums from the Fuggers, but he vainly sought to obtain adequate help from his subjects.

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[1] "The Story of Bayard," p. 134 (Christopher Hare).

In January 1510 he had made vain appeals at the Diet of Augsburg, for although they reluctantly voted 6,000 foot-soldiers and 1,800 horsemen for six months, the troops never arrived. On all sides the Swiss were looked upon as the turning-point for success, so that the proudest sovereigns of Europe were contesting for the friendship of the mountain cantons. Fortunately for Maximilian, the French had interfered with the Swiss trade at Milan and roused their indignation, so that, in February 1511, he was able to conclude a defensive treaty with a large proportion of the cantons. This placed him in an independent position when the Congress of Mantua was held in the following month, and he was able to refuse all the offers of the Pope, while the French still continued to hold their aggressive stand in Italy.

CHAPTER XIII

DIET OF AUGSBURG—THE WARRIOR POPE JULIUS II

1510—1511

Diet of Augsburg refuses supplies for the war in Italy—Maximilian tries to raise an army—Pope Julius II makes peace with Venice and attacks Ferrara—Siege of Mirandola—Maximilian befriends the sons of Lodovico Sforza of Milan—His correspondence with his daughter Marguerite—She cannot obtain money for him from the Netherlands—Her wise advice.

SEEN from the national point of view, the members of the Diet of Augsburg had made a great mistake when in January 1510, they had refused the earnest and repeated demands of their sovereign for adequate help in the campaign of Italy. By so doing they lost for Germany the opportunity of taking a predominant place in European politics, and left the Pope and Italy entirely in the hands of France. Maximilian, on the other hand, was passionately desirous of maintaining the greatness of the Empire and rousing the patriotism of his people.

It is true that the Diet at last grudgingly voted the expenses of 1,800 horsemen and 6,000 foot-soldiers for six months, but the manner of raising them was so slow and inefficient that the troops never took the field. Moreover Maximilian could do nothing of importance with soldiers levied for so short a period, as he was absolutely without means to pay for their longer service, so that the fruits of success would be lost at the critical moment. He was willing to sacrifice to a great extent the heirlooms of the Hapsburg family; he had just pawned two splendid golden collars inlaid with precious stones, one of which was in the hands of the Fuggers, and in a letter to his daughter he mentions several precious rings with carbuncles, rubies, pearls, and other gems. He also raises money in some way to buy good war-horses, so important in the fighting of the day; and as he is in want of ships-of-war, he sends a special messenger to inquire about some galleys which bring spices to Antwerp, and which he hears are like those used by the Venetians.

Meantime, Pope Julius continues to increase his demands upon the Venetians. Not satisfied with recovering his territory, he insists upon their submission in all Church matters. The Republic is to give up all claims to nominate to benefices and bishoprics, and lose all rights to tax the clergy or try ecclesiastical cases in her courts. This, however, was yielded unwillingly, with a secret reservation. But a greater blow, from which not all their armies or their crafty diplomacy could protect them, had been struck to their commerce by the doubling of the Cape of Good Hope, which diverted to Lisbon their splendid traffic with the East, and soon Venice would cease to be ranked as a first-class Power.

Pope Julius II, having now obtained all that he wanted from Venice, removed the ban of excommunication from the Republic, and once more turned his thoughts to "the expulsion of the barbarian." By his success alike in war and cunning diplomacy, he had recovered and increased the conquests of his predecessor, Alexander VI, and was now in a position to satisfy his ambition as a great temporal power. Yet he must have realised that he had only done all this by allying himself with the foreign invader of Italy, and it is possible that some feeling of remorse made him desire to drive out the invading French and leave his country free. He also saw grounds for alarm in the overwhelming position of the French in Northern Italy, he could not forget the loss of his cherished city, Genoa, but above all, his hatred of Ferrara was scarcely veiled by the pious desire to add to the Church's greatness the dominions of the Duke, who was an ally of France. Also his own profitable salt-works were interfered with by those of Ferrara at Comacchio.

With these mixed motives, Julius suddenly turned against the ally who had been so useful to him, and by this disgraceful deed he won the applause of Italian patriots and was hailed as the Defender of his country. To his fiery, warlike spirit, these last years of battle must have been the most triumphant and happiest of his life. The war began with an incident which gave him the first advantage. The French King refused to pay the Swiss mercenaries a sum which he considered exorbitant, and when they withdrew from his service, the Pope hastened to engage them, to the number of fifteen thousand men. He then excommunicated Alfonso Duke of Ferrara, and Louis XII made the next move in the game by convoking a Synod of the French clergy at Tours, which justified war against the Pope, and threatened a General Council.

Meantime the French held their own, defeating an attack on Genoa by sea and land, while they were also successful in taking Modena, and attacked Bologna, where the Pope was at that moment in ill health. The danger was imminent, but the French were driven back by the Venetian troops, and the unconquerable spirit of the warrior Pope carried all before him. He was general of his army, shared the hardships of his soldiers and inspired them with his vigour and zeal. An incident in this war gives a striking example of his spirit.

It was now late in the year, but he took the field himself in the snows of winter, occupied Concordia, and by forced marches soon reached the village of San Felice, where he set up his camp. He then sent word to the widowed Countess of Mirandola that she should give up her city, as he required it for his attack upon Ferrara. The lady was a daughter of the famous general Giovanni Trivulzio, whose courage and devotion to France she inherited, and she sent reply that " nothing would induce the Countess of Mirandola to give up her city, and that with the help of God she would know how to keep it against all those who wished to take it from her."

Furious at this defiance, the Pope swore that he would have the city by favour or force, and commanded his nephew, the Duke of Urbino, to prepare for the siege. Bayard and his company were with the Duke of Ferrara, and they had taken up their position at a hamlet called Ospitaletto, between two arms of the Po, about twelve miles from Ferrara. From here Bayard sent a hundred men-at-arms and some cannon, under the command of two young knights, to help the garrison of Mirandola, and three days later the siege began.

Meantime Bayard had learnt through his spies that Pope Julius himself was proposing to go to the siege of Mirandola on the morrow, and that he would travel to the camp with cardinals, bishops, and other noble churchmen in his suite, but that he would only have a guard of a hundred horsemen. This was delightful news for the gallant knight, and he proposed to take all this goodly company prisoners: a feat which would resound through Europe.

At first all promised well, for the Pope, who was an early riser, had started at daybreak in his litter. But he had not gone far before a terrible snowstorm came on, and the Cardinal of Pavia exclaimed: "It is not possible to continue the journey; we must go back at once." The Pope agreed and was carried back to San Felice, knowing nothing of the ambuscade which had been prepared by Bayard who had only attacked the servants and others sent on in advance. But on discovering his mistake, he rushed off in pursuit and arrived just as the Pope was hurrying out of his litter. "If he had delayed while there was time to say a paternoster, he would have been caught." When the Pope heard of his narrow escape, it gave him such a shock that he had a touch of fever, but he rose from his bed more determined than ever to take the city.

For six days and nights it snowed without ceasing, so that within the camp it reached almost the height of a man, while the moat and ditches round the walls of Mirandola were frozen two feet thick, so that the heavy cannon could be brought quite close without breaking the ice. Pope Julius was now in the besieging camp, and he took the greatest delight in watching his artillery battering at the walls until two great breaches had been made. The bombarding went on for three weeks, and the gallant defenders began to lose all hope. During all the bitter weather the warrior Pope had been giving orders everywhere, almost under fire, wearing armour outside his priestly dress.

Within the walls, the Countess had been a match for him in spirit and valour, and not until the fortifications were nearly battered down did she yield to the advice of the most gallant soldiers of her garrison, and surrender her citadel. Julius determined to make the most of his victory, and he refused to take possession of the conquered city in the ordinary way, by riding in at the head of his forces through the gate. He caused a bridge to be thrown across the frozen moat, and clambered in through a breach in the walls. According to the stipulation, the brave Countess was free to depart, and the Pope himself escorted her politely out of the city she had so fiercely defended.

When the news reached Ferrara of the fall of Mirandola, Duke Alfonso expected an immediate attack on his capital, and therefore destroyed the bridge he had built across the Po, and prepared to defend the city with his life. The Castello of Ferrara, standing four-square with its mighty crenellated towers in the very heart of the city, was one of the most famous fortresses in the land and was believed to be impregnable.

When the Pope, triumphant in his success at Mirandola, called a Council of War and suggested taking Ferrara by storm, he was assured that only by famine could it be taken. In order to cut off the supply of provisions, he was told that it would be needful to take the fortress of La Bastida, about twenty-five miles from Ferrara. "Certainly we must have that place ; I shall not rest till it is taken," was his prompt reply.

A brilliant stratagem was suggested for seizing La Bastida at night by a sudden alarm, but the Pope had not reckoned with Bayard, who discovered the scheme at the last moment, and with all his skill and courage managed to thwart it. It is too long to tell the heroic story in full, but the result was an unlooked-for battle which cost the Pope three thousand of his best men, besides the loss of all his artillery and his camp furnishing, and many prisoners of importance. This complete victory of the Chevalier Bayard, fought on February 2, 1511, was the salvation of the Duchy of Ferrara.

Pope Julius was furious, and vowed a hundred times a day: "Ferrara, Ferrara ! I will have you, by the body of God !" After this defeat everything seemed to go against him. Trivulzio, the French general, made a descent upon Bologna, drove out the Pope's family, and restored to power the ancient family of the Bentivoglio. He also recovered Concordia and Mirandola. The Pope retired to Ravenna; his fortunes were now at their lowest ebb, but the will of the fiery old man was unbroken.

Maximilian used all his influence to prevent the Swiss giving any help to Venice or her allies, for his hatred of the Republic was stronger than ever. We see this in his letters to his daughter Marguerite, in which he gloats over the misfortunes of his enemy. "Hippolytus, Cardinal d'Este has slain and drowned four thousand men of the Republic who had attacked Ferrara, and has taken eleven galleys of Venice and destroyed with his artillery five other galleys, with other success. . . ." He adds that he has also news that his men in Slavonia have thrown themselves upon the four hundred Stradiot Venetians and chased them to the gates of their garrison."

The Duke of Ferrara writes to Maximilian to announce the advantages he has gained over the Venetians, such as taking a blockhouse or a mill full of provisions. At the same time news are brought of a frightful earthquake in Constantinople when nearly half the city walls were cast down and over a thousand people were slain. The Grand Turk had been compelled to retire to "Andrilope" until such time as the walls of Constantinople should be built up again. We next hear how the city of Bougie in Africa has been taken by Pierre de Navarre, admiral of King Ferdinand of Aragon.

The next letter to Marguerite contains news which touch her father more closely. It is a terrible blow to know that the Holy Father has made peace with the hated Venetians, and also the Swiss, while there is little doubt that King Henry VIII will join them before long. The Emperor refuses to listen to any persuasion, and declares that he will adhere to the League of Cambray and remain in alliance with France. He has raised, at great expense, an army of 36,000 men to march against Venice, and he adds as a kind of farewell direction : " And if anything should happen to us . . . I request that you will always take good care of our very dear and beloved children, and employ yourself in these affairs as best you can." He has already told Marguerite by word of mouth where his " great treasure " is hidden away in the safe place, that she may find it if anything should befall him in the coming war.

If Maximilian was a stern enemy, he could also be a most generous friend. In one of his letters to his daughter, he desires her to give " the young Duke of Milan three thousand livres in addition to the annual sum already allowed him." This is Massimiliano, the eldest son of the ill-fated Lodovico Sforza, who with his brother Francesco had been for some time brought up at the Court of the Emperor and his wife Bianca Sforza, but who were now under the care of Marguerite and receiving the same education as the Archduke Charles. There appears to have been an alarm at one time that the Pope or the Venetians might carry them off from Malines by some subtle device, and the Regent is warned in order that she may take every precaution for their safety. It is amusing to hear that a dispute had arisen between Massimiliano and the boy Duke of

Saxe, on a question of precedence; and the Emperor, who is called upon to decide, makes the genial suggestion that "one is to enter first to-day and the other to-morrow."

Incidentally we gain much information from these familiar letters between father and daughter; thus when the Bishop of Arras dies, we understand what a plurality of benefices meant in that day, for this is the list placed at the disposal of the Emperor, when Monseigneur Nicolas de Ruistre gave up his earthly possessions: "L'Evesché d'Arras, la cure de Haarlem, la prévoste de Saint-Pierre en nôtre ville de Louvain, la chanoinie de Terremonde, le personnat [cathedral dignity] à Brabant, la chanoinie de Courtray, la chapelle de Flobecq . . . que ledit feu évésque avoit en son vivant," being also Archdeacon of Brussels in the Church of Cambray.

But the most important and at the same time the most painful part of this ceaseless correspondence for Marguerite, must have been her father's constant want of money which compelled him to use her as his deputy, in demands upon the States. Thus he applies for an income of fifty thousand livres to be voted for his use every year. The Regent of the Netherlands, who makes vain appeals for the necessary expense of defending her lands against Guelders, for instance, is greatly dismayed. She knows how unwilling her people are to grant money for the Italian wars which they so strongly disapprove of, and she writes to her father:

"In all humility, Monseigneur, I must tell you how I grieve that there is no means of fulfilling your desire . . . of the fifty thousand gold florins which you desire to obtain from the lands over here, during your life, as you have written to me several times. Monseigneur, I have not yet found, by the advice of any of your servants, that it has been a suitable time to speak of the said matter . . . knowing indeed that there would be little result, I have until now put it off. . . ."

Marguerite also in vain tries to persuade her father that he is being made use of by the King of France for his own ends, in this war with Venice. We find her lamenting, in a private letter to a trusted counsellor, that the Emperor should have given up Verona, and Lignano on the Adige to Louis XII in payment for money lent; she fears that the same thing may happen with regard to other places. In short, her political instinct was far more true and clear-sighted than that of Maximilian, who was always carried away by his own personal impulses and desires.

CHAPTER XIV

SWISS WAR IN ITALY. DIET OF COLOGNE

1511—1512

Maximilian has a wild plan of becoming Pope as well as Emperor—But Julius II recovers—Death of the Empress Bianca Sforza—The Swiss make war in Italy—Gaston de Foix takes Brescia, but dies in the hour of victory before Ravenna—Diet of Cologne—Important reforms suggested by Maximilian—Empire divided into circles for judicial purposes—Troubles with Charles Duke of Guelders.

WE have another curious insight into the wild dreams of the Emperor Maximilian, when the Pope was believed to be at the point of death in August 1511. He actually wrote to his daughter Marguerite with the extraordinary suggestion that he should be appointed Coadjutor to Julius II, and after his death should be elected Pope. This is the letter which some historians have looked upon as an elaborate joke, but in which he appears to have been quite serious.

September 18, 1511.

[*Autograph*]

"Very dear and much beloved daughter . . . we send to-morrow Monsieur de Gurce, bishop, to Rome to the Pope to find some way in which we can agree with him to take us a coadjutor, in order that after his death we may be assured of having the Papacy, and become a priest and after that a saint, so that it will be a necessity that after my death you will be constrained to adore me, which will be much glory for me. . . . I am sending a post to the King of Aragon to beg that he will help us to arrive at this. . . . I begin also to work upon the Cardinals, with whom two or three hundred thousand ducats will do me good service. . . . I beg you to keep this matter entirely secret, although I fear that in a few days all the world will have to know it, for it is not possible to work so great a matter secretly, with so many people working . . . and so much money . . . I commend you to God.

"Written by the hand of your good father MAXIMILIANUS, future Pope. . . ."

In another letter of his, written from Brixen two days before to Paul of Liechtenstein, he states positively that "the Papacy is a function which should be held with the Empire, and that he desires the honour of uniting them." To prove that he was in earnest, he entered into negotiation with the Fuggers to borrow an immense sum from them "to conciliate the Cardinals," by pledging the crown and sceptre of Charlemagne and all the imperial ornaments from his store of treasures.

Wild as this project may seem, it was in fact no new idea to combine the spiritual and temporal rule of the world. At the time of the Jubilee of the year 1300, in Rome, Pope Boniface VIII had the same extravagant pretensions, for we behold him seated on the throne of Constantine, proudly arrayed with sword and crown and sceptre, proclaiming aloud to the assembled crowd of pilgrims: "I am Cæsar—I am Emperor!"[1] It is sometimes held that Dante alludes to this scene when he tells us in the "Purgatorio" that "Rome was wont to have two suns to guide us on the two roads, of God and of the world, but now . . . the sword is united to the crozier, from which evil will follow."[1]

But this wild dream soon faded away when Pope Julius suddenly recovered, and showed himself more energetic than ever. He concluded a "Holy League" with Spain and Venice, nominally to protect the dominions of the Church, but secretly with the object of driving the French out of Italy, while Maximilian looked on, having made a truce with Venice for ten months while he still remained an ally of France. During all this time, the war with Guelders had been smouldering on, a constant trouble to poor Marguerite, who was also much distressed by the outbreak of hostilities between the Hansa League and the Netherlands, when the whole Dutch fleet was captured by the men of Lubeck and their allied cities. On the accession of Henry VIII, it was through the Regent's mediation that an alliance was made between her father and England.

In January 1512, Maximilian writes to Marguerite to announce the death of his wife, the Empress Bianca Maria, who had long been in failing health.

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[1] Another account is that these words were spoken by Boniface VIII to the Envoys of the Emperor Albert I in 1299.

[2] Purg. xvi. line 106.

The letter is so characteristic that it is worthy of quotation.

"Very dear and much loved daughter,—To-day, to our great regret, mourning, perturbation, grief, and sorrow of heart, we have had the sad news of the death of our very dear and much-loved companion, Bianca Maria, your stepmother, who on the last day of this past December, after having received all her sacraments catholically and as it becomes so virtuous and honest a Princess, has rendered her spirit to God our Creator, to whom we pray that He have mercy upon her. And since it has pleased His Divinity to will and suffer this to be, knowing that He is almighty, we will accept this with patience, and we will avoid in so far as our frailty can refrain, from all wishes repugnant to the Divine dispensation.

"In any case we have the consolation that we firmly believe, according to her virtuous, holy life, that she is with the blessed in the kingdom of Paradise. Which thing, to our great distress, we have wished to signify to our good daughter; for we know that as you rejoice in our good prosperity, you will be distressed at the loss of our good and virtuous companion, whose soul, as of your good stepmother, we recommend to you, that you may cause prayers for the same to be made in all churches and monasteries of 'par delà.' We wish that you cause mourning to be worn for her by our very dear and much-beloved children and the Knights of our Order [the Golden Fleece], and such of the principals of our Privy Council only who accompany them to the offering, . . . and also to hold solemn obsequies as are meet and customary for such a Princess.

"Given in our town of Freiburg in Brisco, January, 3, 1512.

"Your good father, MAXI."

Thus does Maximilian pay his dignified and pious tribute to the memory of the Italian lady whom he had married from policy, and had always treated with due kindness and respect, but usually from afar. No such admirable letter as this could he have written when he lost his beloved Marie, the dear wife of his youth, whose name he could never speak without emotion to the end of his days. Marguerite wrote a beautiful and appropriate reply, and then the unloved Bianca shared the common fate of oblivion.

In the splendid tomb at Innsbruck, of the Emperor Maximilian, the figure of the Empress Bianca Maria may still be seen in that noble company of kings and queens of the House of Hapsburg—in beautiful bronze-work, clothed in the stiff and stately brocades of her lifetime.

Meantime there was trouble in Italy, for the Swiss were now making war on their own account. They were promised help from Venice, and Gaston de Foix,[1] now Governor of Milan, found himself threatened on the side of Bologna and Parma. Although this bold attempt failed, and the Swiss were obliged to retreat in disorder, the beginning of 1512 found

[1] Duc de Nemours, nephew of Louis XII—brother of Germaine de Foix, Queen of Spain.

the King of France doing his utmost to obtain the help of the cantons. He was threatened by invasion both by Spain and England, Venice had recovered Bergamo and Brescia, while the army of the Holy League was advancing upon Bologna and Ferrara.

Brescia was looked upon as the key of Venice; and when Gaston de Foix heard that the citadel still held out, he hastened at once through flooded rivers and snowstorms to carry help to the French garrison. The Doge of Venice was himself in Brescia at the time, and had sent a messenger to Venice for a strong force to be sent at once to intercept the French army. But he was too late, for Gaston de Foix, with the help of Bayard, who volunteered to lead the attack, made a successful assault on the city, which was taken. But in the very moment of victory, as he was crossing the rampart at the head of his men, Bayard was dangerously wounded and unable to hinder the massacre and pillage which too often followed when a place was taken by storm. The spoils taken were valued at three millions of crowns, and this helped to ruin the French cause in Italy, for many of the soldiers, demoralised by plunder, deserted with their ill-gotten gains and went home.

As we have seen, Maximilian had long been uncertain and vacillating in his alliances, but now he definitely decided to join Pope Julius and the King of Spain. As usual, there were companies of German and Swiss mercenaries both in the Italian army and also with the French, and the Emperor, to whom they owed some kind of allegiance, sent word to the companies of German Landsknechte that they were to retire home at once, and were not to fight the armies of the League. Gaston de Foix, general at the age of twenty-four, heard of this message when he was in the French camp before Ravenna. He felt that it was absolutely necessary to make some decisive move at once, the more so as Louis XII insisted upon immediate battle before his troops were recalled for home defence. A council was held, and the general opinion was that "it was better to fight than to starve," for their supplies were now stopped on every side.

During the night of April 10, 1512, the French general threw a bridge over the river Ronco, and next morning, Easter Day, he led his army across and made an attack on the troops of the League, who were encamped and strongly fortified on the southern side. Protected on one side by the river, in front they were guarded by a line of armed waggons. The battle began with an attack of artillery on each side, followed by a desperate engagement between the opposing cavalry, in which it is said that the Spaniards carried out their usual tactics of constantly taking aim at the horses of the French; for they have a proverb which says: "When the horse is dead, the man-at-arms is lost."

It was late in the day, and already the tide of victory was on the side of the French when Bayard, who was riding in pursuit of the flying enemy, said to the Duc de Nemours: "Praise be to God, you have won the battle, my lord, and the world will ring with your fame. I pray you to remain here by the bridge and rally your men-at-arms to keep them from pillaging the camp, but do not leave, I entreat you, till we return." But in the tumult which followed, Gaston saw some of his men attacked, and, with his usual impetuous chivalry, rode forth to their rescue, without waiting to see who followed him, and in the mêlée was unhorsed and killed. The battle was won, and Ravenna was taken, but it was indeed dearly bought by the loss of so gallant a leader.

La Palisse, who was now in command of the French army, was unable to profit much by his victory, or even to keep control over his motley troops. The warrior Pope was more than a match for him in diplomacy as well as in actual fighting, and he managed to conclude a truce between the Emperor and Venice, although the Republic could not be induced to yield Verona and Vicenza to him. However, Maximilian allowed 18,000 Swiss to pass through the Tyrol on their way to join the Venetians, and somewhat later he was induced to join the Holy League. This made it needful that he should obtain the sinews of war from his Estates, and he went to Trier to meet the assembled Diet. But, once more, he found it a hopeless task to obtain any help from his subjects for a foreign war which they entirely disapproved of, and after wasting much time in discussion, he left in despair for the Netherlands. Although the Diet met again later at Cologne, the Emperor could obtain only such trifling assistance that he was unable to take any active part in the expulsion of the French from Milan.

But the Diet of Cologne (1512) achieved one important result, although it was only completely carried out in the future. Since 1500 the Empire had been divided into Circles, and Maximilian now suggested that new Circles should be added to the six already existing. The seventh, of the Lower Rhine, was to include the lands of the four Rhenish Electors. The eighth, of Lower Saxony, was to be composed of the dominions of the Elector of Saxony and Brandenburg, those of the Duke of Pomerania and others. The ninth and tenth Circles were to be formed from Maximilian's hereditary dominions in Austria and Burgundy. Each Circle was to have a Captain to carry out the decisions of the Imperial Chamber. But when it was proposed that the Captains should be supported by an armed force, the Estates took alarm, so that in point of fact, this scheme, once so dear to the heart of Berthold of Mainz, was not actually carried out until many years later.

Meantime Marguerite finds that her Regency of the Netherlands is no sinecure. She has trouble and complaints on every side. The States of Utrecht write to make a grievous complaint that her general, Florent d'Egmond, had attacked their city and done much damage, the canals being frozen at the time, and he would have taken the city, had not a troop of cavalry from Guelders given the alarm and checked the assault. Marguerite expresses her deep regret and says that she has ordered Egmond to repair the damage and set free his prisoners. This general of hers will not give her the chance of a quiet life, and she thinks he is much to blame for the constant warfare. Charles of Guelders is certainly of this opinion, for he also writes to "Madame," complaining that his subjects are "always being pillaged and devoured," while he concludes most courteously, praying that God will grant her a good life and a long one, and signing himself: "Your very humble and very obedient servant and cousin, CHARLES."

After this, we are not prepared to hear that three days later, the men of Guelders surprise and take the city of Harderwick, in spite of all treaties, and that the turbulent Charles is tampering with the allegiance of the men of Amsterdam, and giving serious annoyance to the Bishop of Utrecht. But there was worse still to come. Marguerite writes to her father from Ghent, in April, that a company of twenty-four Flemish merchants with a safe-conduct were on their way to Frankfort when they were set upon by a hundred horsemen of Guelders, who killed three and wounded others, taking the rest prisoners and holding them to ransom, "which is a great scandal and loss to the aforesaid poor merchants." There are indignant complaints from Malines and Antwerp, where the burghers insist that the road shall be made safe for their merchandise. This last outrage became an international scandal.

The Regent of the Netherlands appeals to the King of France to interfere, as Duke Charles is in his pay; the merchants must be set free and receive restitution, and the town of Harderwick must be restored to her. Louis XII apparently complies, for Charles of Guelders courteously explains that he has already given up the town of Weesp and the Castle of Muiden at his Majesty's request, but "as for Harderwick, although it was taken without his permission, he cannot possibly give it up. . . ."

The King appears to be playing a double part, for he writes a most friendly and pious letter to Maximilian, disclaiming all connection with the Duke of Guelders, and he also sends the most complimentary and flattering letters to Marguerite: "Je vous tiens si bonne, si sage, si vertueuse," . . . but he still sends help to the rebel Prince. The Regent is obliged to carry on the war in desperate circumstances, for her father has no money to send her, her generals make pitiful appeals for the soldiers' pay; they are starving and in rags, and are compelled to "manger le bonhomme." This is the quaint phrase from the old French folk-song:

> Cessez, cessez, gens d'armes et piétons
> De piller et manger le Bonhomme
> Qui de longtemps Jacques Bonhomme se nomme.

The terrible meaning is plain enough; the peasant is literally pillaged by these unpaid mercenaries of all he possesses, eaten out of house and home. Yet no compromise is possible, and this war of Guelders continues with the strangest episodes, which are chronicled in such full detail that they would almost require a volume to themselves. We can only allude to a few incidents. The important town of Bommel, on the river Waal, is taken by the cunning stratagem of a vessel laden with faggots, under which a number of soldiers from Guelderland were hidden. The Bishop of Utrecht gives much trouble, and the convents of the city send money to Duke Charles, and treasures of the Cathedral are secretly sent to him. The town of Hattem is given up by the treachery of the commander, whose mistress persuades him to sell it to Charles for 8,000 gold florins.

Then Marguerite writes more hopefully to the Emperor; she has raised 15,000 good horsemen and 6,000 foot-soldiers, and also has sixteen "serpentines" (form of cannon) in their train. It is true that she has not much powder, but she hopes to obtain some. She boldly applies to Henry VIII for help, and he sends her a certain number of men-at-arms under Edward Poyning. These acquit themselves very well, especially the English artillery, "and fight much better than any others." She has already spent her dowry on the war, and her coffers are now empty, although she expects 20,000 crowns shortly from Spain (her own dowry). The army must be kept up at any cost, for the seige of Venloo is a matter of urgent importance, as it will place the neighbouring country in her hands.

It is difficult to make a selection from the immense number of letters which passed between Maximilian and his daughter. They are extremely interesting and characteristic of them both. Marguerite usually writes from Malines, her chief place of residence, or occasionally from Ghent, Brussels, or Antwerp. Those from the Emperor are addressed from all parts of his vast dominions; from a busy seaport, an ancient city, a country village, a tent encamped before some hostile town, or the lonely keep of some feudal castle. His restless energy is marvellous, and nothing can conquer his inveterate optimism. In the midst of the most serious State difficulties, he goes forth with the heart of a boy to enjoy his favourite pastime of the chase, the passion of his life which he cannot speak of without enthusiasm. He alludes to his exploits in his letters to his daughter, in whom he finds a kindred spirit. Always a dreamer, he has the knack of finding some high and noble motive for anything which delights him. Thus in his book on hunting, written for the benefit of his grandsons and descendants, he writes :

" Always rejoice in the great pleasure of hunting, for thy recreation and health, also for the comfort of thy subjects ; because through hunting you become better known both to poor and rich. . . .

"The rich as well as the poor have daily access to you while you are engaged in hunting and so can complain of their needs and present them to you—and you can hear their complaints with pleasure, for during the enjoyment of the hunt you can listen to the petitions of the poor. To this end, I would always have you take your secretary and some counsellors with you when you go a-hunting, so that you may be ready to give satisfaction to the common man, when he approaches and comes near to see you—a thing you can do better on a hunting trip than in houses. . . .

" In order to lose no time, you must never fail to do this except when the falcons fly or the hounds run."

CHAPTER XV

MAXIMILIAN JOINS A LEAGUE WITH LEO X, ENGLAND, AND SPAIN

1512—1515

Various alliances proposed for the Archduke Charles—Maximilian joins a league with Pope Leo X, England, and Spain—Louis XII invades Italy and is defeated at Novara, 1513*—Maximilian wins the battle of the Spurs at Guinegaste—The Emperor, Marguerite, and the Archduke Charles meet Henry VIII and Wolsey at Tournay—Peace concluded with France—Louis XII marries Mary of England, sister of Henry VIII—Death of Louis XII—François I invades Italy.*

THE Emperor Maximilian always took immense interest in all that concerned his grandchildren. They are constantly mentioned in his letters to Marguerite, who watched over them with a mother's care; every little incident in their daily life is mentioned, every childish illness, and above all, that which concerns their religious training. He enters into minute details with regard to their first communion, and is most careful as to their attendants. No change can ever be made in the household without consulting him, and as they grow older, the subject of marriage negotiations for them is rarely out of his mind.

Already seven or eight treaties had been signed in respect of a suitable alliance for the young Prince Charles; he was barely eighteen months old when Claude of France, the infant daughter of Louis XII, was betrothed to him, and this engagement was renewed in 1502, 1504, and 1505; then in July 1508 Mary of England, daughter of Henry VII, takes the place of the French Princess, and in 1509 she sends him a ring. There were several other princesses suggested, but in the end Charles was destined to make his own choice of a wife. As for his sisters, we have frequent allusions to Marguerite's anxiety about their future, and it is a serious subject of regret to her that there are so few princes available. However, she succeeded in making marriage arrangements for all her nieces a few years later, and we have an interesting account of a meeting with Maximilian to discuss one suggested alliance.

He writes to request that his daughter shall bring the young princesses to Brussels with their suites and chariots and a guard of men-at-arms; litters are to be sent for the journey and apartments in his palace will be prepared for them. He also sends venison: "le sommier d'un cerf que j'ay pris, pour les festoyer." Finally a letter arrives from the Castle of La Vueren announcing that he will arrive at one o'clock to have time for a long talk with his daughter, and the supper, where they will all meet, is to be at five o'clock.

There was much to discuss, for Marguerite was always entrusted to further the negotiations with Henry VIII, and now she has to win over the English ambassadors and obtain the money promised towards the war. There was the question as to sending to Milan young Massimiliano Sforza, the eldest son of the unfortunate Lodovico, who had been in the care of Marguerite since the death of the Empress Bianca. She strongly advised the Emperor to support the lad's claim to the Duchy of Milan, thus proving that he did not wish to keep it for himself. But the most important question to decide was the proposed marriage of "Madame Marie," the third granddaughter, aged nine, with Louis, the son of Wladislav VII King of Hungary. Unlike so many other schemes of Maximilian, this wedding actually took place in 1521, with most important results.

Unfortunately, the Regent has nothing but bad news to report about the war with Guelders. The city of Woudrichem at the mouth of the Meuse, belonging to her friend the Countess of Hornes, has been taken by the indomitable Charles, and only recovered with great difficulty, for, as Henri de Nassau writes: "the nights are so dark and our men are so often tipsy that I fear they will be no good. . . ." The towns of Tiel and Wissen are taken by the men of Guelders, and Marguerite bitterly laments the desolation of the hapless peasants, pillaged alike by friend and foe, more especially in the flat country of Brabant.

The following year, 1513, begins more hopefully with a league between the Emperor and the Pope, both offensive and defensive. Maximilian is to adhere to the Lateran Council and refuse to recognise the schismatic Council of Pisa. The Pope, in return, is to place the interdict of the Church on Venice, and if needful on Charles of Guelders and his lands. But fortunately for his reputation Julius II did not live to carry out the scheme. The great fighting Pope, who had loved nothing better than to change his tiara for a helmet, and his sceptre for a sword, brought his warlike career to an end in February, and was succeeded by Leo X, the art- and pleasure-loving Medici Cardinal.

The new Pope found himself in a difficult position, and was ready to form an alliance, in March, with the Emperor, Spain, and England, to drive the French out of Italy and divide their conquests. The Swiss had been employed to such purpose in the rescue of Milan that they were practically masters of the city, and the young Duke, Massimiliano Sforza, only ruled by their will. Maximilian had been at length convinced by his daughter of the importance of alliance with Henry VIII, and by her diplomacy, a treaty was concluded on April 5, 1513, between himself, Spain, and England, from which last he was to receive 100,000 golden crowns, while the marriage of his grandson Charles with Mary of England was to complete the compact.

Meantime Louis XII had lost Navarre, but nothing daunted, he once more crossed the Alps, and the Venetian forces advanced to his support. A French fleet soon held Genoa, and the invader was so successful that before the end of May, only Novara and Como were left to the Duke of Milan. But early in June the French army attacked Novara which was held by the Swiss, and a decisive battle followed in which the foot-soldiers of the cantons, without any help of cavalry or artillery, won the day by their desperate spirit and courage. Once more the French were driven back across the mountain frontier of the Mont Cenis, leaving all their baggage behind, and the Venetians met with a severe defeat from the imperial troops. Thus was Milan again lost and won.

Before the end of June, Louis XII had to face another foe, for the English army landed at Calais, under the command of the King himself. He had not followed the advice given him by the Emperor, who had sent, through his daughter, a complete plan of invasion. Henry was to land at Crotoy, a few leagues from Boulogne.

"And our good brother is to know that the tide there is three hours low, and the other nine hours high . . . and that the sand is so clinging that for big horses and men-at-arms it will be necessary to have a bridge which may be used in any state of the tide. It is true that I have not tried it myself, but for thirty years I have wished to do so. . . . Our father-in-law, the Duke [Charles of Burgundy], came once by the mouth of the river Somme and thought to take Amiens by assault, but his enterprise failed by one bridge, for it was not a good one and he lost many brave men, but he went off into Normandy and ravaged all the country. . . . I would advise my good brother to make his way to Saint Quentin and take that city, so as to have provisions for his army in all the country around. . . . And I will be there in person with a good company of men-at-arms. . . ."

Maximilian left Namur on July 22, passed through Grammont, Oudenarde, and Aire, then moved the camp to Guinegaste to prevent the French from sending provisions to the besieged town of Thérouanne, before which Henry was encamped with his army. It seems strange to know that the Emperor was practically acting as a condottiere to England, receiving pay of a hundred crowns a day, and personally at the head of the campaign. On August 16, he was successful in a spirited engagement, routing the French troops who were taking help to the beleaguered city; the Duc de Longueville and the Chevalier Bayard were amongst the prisoners, and the French are always indignant at this being called the "Battle of Spurs," for they maintain that the small company engaged were not sent to fight, but were ordered to retreat in case of attack. But the result of this success was the surrender of Thérouanne on August 23, when the fortifications were destroyed and the city was set on fire.

The next place besieged was Tournay, and on his way there, Henry VIII paid a visit to the Princess Marguerite at Lille. After the capitulation of Tournay, an important political meeting was held in this city, and the Emperor was very anxious that his daughter should be present to assist with the negotiations. When we consider the important position held by the Regent of the Netherlands, there is a curious little feminine touch in her letter from Lille on September 22, in which she says:

"I am willing to ride thither if it will be for your good service . . . but otherwise it is not seemly for a widow woman to go trotting about and to visit armies for pleasure. . . ."

It was indeed a noteworthy meeting of great sovereigns. Marguerite brought with her Prince Charles, now a youth of thirteen who was already initiated into all the secrets of diplomacy, taking part in every council of war or peace, as training for the great position he would hold on his majority. Maximilian was there, the doyen of the party at the age of fifty-four, a splendid figure in his weather-beaten armour; while Henry VIII, thirty years younger, in gorgeous array, was accompanied by the astute Wolsey, who had just been made Bishop of Tournay by the Pope. A satisfactory agreement was signed between the King of England and the Regent:

"My good sister and cousin, I promise you, on the word of a king, never to treat or conclude peace with our common enemies, the French, without your seal and permission, on condition that you on your side do the same. . . ."

The marriage of Charles with Mary, the young sister of the King of England, is definitely settled for the following year.

The immediate reason of this renewed contract was that Louis XII, depressed by his losses, was trying to arrange an alliance between Ferdinand, the younger brother of Charles, and his daughter Renée, who was promised the Duchy of Milan and other lands in Italy as her dowry. But Marguerite used her strongest persuasion with her father against such a plan, and wisely says: "Monseigneur, there are great mountains between Spain and France, while between France and England there is the sea, but between our lands and France there is no barrier, and you know the great and inveterate hatred which the French bear to our House." Then she adds that with regard to making war against the Turks and Infidels, it will be quite time to do so when there is peace in Christendom.

Wherever the young King of England went he carried an atmosphere of festivity, and we are not surprised to hear that "to please the Lady Margaret, he played the lute and the cornet, dancing and jousting before her." But he was probably soon bored with these sedate Austrians, for he left Tournay on October 13, and reached home before the end of the month, well satisfied with the result of his expedition.

It is worthy of notice what very small results followed the most pompous preparations for war in those days. To sweep over Europe and take one capital after another, as we have seen in modern warfare, was quite beyond the military science of the sixteenth century. As a rule, armies fought only during the five summer months and found it difficult enough then to procure provisions and means of transport. Neither the English, French, nor Spanish ever penetrated many miles into France, and the French armies went no farther into Germany, the Netherlands, or Spain. Henry VIII might set forth with a great flourish of trumpets, but he knew that he could never conquer France with the means at his disposal, and he was always ready for peace in return for a money indemnity, and a town or so thrown in. The last event of the campaign had been the Treaty of Lille, October 13, 1513, which bound Henry, Maximilian, and Ferdinand to a combined invasion of France before the following June.

The King of Aragon was the first to break his bond, with his usual plausible and pious excuses, so on March 18, 1514, he renewed his truce with France, and before long he won over the Emperor by his crafty wiles, to listen to French proposals of peace, under the impression that Henry VIII would follow suit. Meantime the marriage arranged between Charles, who had reached the appointed age of fourteen, and Mary of England, who was eighteen, was postponed from month to month, and it was even reported that the boy prince had said, that he wanted a wife and not a mother.

In the previous month of January, Anne de Bretagne, twice Queen of France, had died suddenly at Blois. Louis XII was fifty-two years of age, worn out and decrepit, but several brides were proposed for him, and before he had been two months a widower, the startling rumour spread in Rome that the King of France would seal a peace with England by choosing the rejected bride of Charles, the beautiful young sister of Henry. Negotiations followed for the alliance and the marriage, and a treaty for both was signed in August 1514, while Ferdinand and the Emperor were left out in the cold. The friendship of England was far more valuable to France than that of any other country, and the crafty diplomacy of Wolsey in this matter far outdid the deceit and guile of Ferdinand. While the King of Spain and Maximilian enjoyed the pleasures of the chase, their priestly opponent would often work for twelve hours together at his State diplomacy, and he won the day, receiving as his reward the most lucrative posts and the highest honours of the Church.

Louis XII was married in October to his unwilling bride, and if it be true that the gaieties and festivities which followed were the cause of the King's death, on the first day of the new year 1515, it was a case of poetic justice. She had only agreed to marry "the very old and sickly" prince, on condition that she might be allowed to choose her second husband herself—as she did in the person of the magnificent Duke of Suffolk.

The new King, François I, brilliant, ambitious, and warlike[1]—but who could not hide under a mask of chivalry the most debased moral character—was filled with the wildest ideas of conquest in Italy, that mirage which had such a fatal attraction for French kings. He lost no time in renewing the treaties with Henry VIII and the Venetians, while the young Prince Charles of Austria, who had attained his legal majority, was persuaded by his tutor Guillaume de Croy, Seigneur de Chièvres, to make terms with France. Charles agreed to marry Renée of France, and promised not to send help to his grandfather Ferdinand until Navarre was restored to Jean d'Albret. Feeling himself now safe from attack, François set forth with a splendid army of 60,000 men across the Col d'Argentière, thus avoiding the passes guarded by the Swiss. He was full of enthusiasm and eager to win glory on the plains of Italy, where his predecessors had fought with such varied success.

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[1] Aged twenty-one.

In the pride of his heart, the young King felt assured of a triumphant campaign. Had it not begun with a good omen, in the gallant raid which La Palisse and the Chevalier Bayard had already made upon Prospero Colonna, at Villefranche?

They had crossed the mountains by the Col de Cabre, where cavalry had never crossed before, and descended suddenly into the plain of Piedmont, crossed the Po at a ford where they had to swim their horses, and were told at the Castle of Carmignole that Colonna and his company had gone on to dine at the little town of Villefranche. Bayard and his friends followed in haste and took the whole party by surprise. The Italian camp contained many valuable horses, splendid equipments, gold and silver plate, and a large sum of money, so the spoils of war proved of great value, though, as usual, the chivalric Bayard refused his share, which was divided amongst his followers.

CHAPTER XVI

FRENCH SUCCESS. MORE HAPSBURG ALLIANCES

1515

Battle of Marignano, 1515—Won by the French—They take Milan, and the Constable of Bourbon is left there as Governor—Pope Leo X supports the victorious French—Maximilian arranges marriages to ensure the succession of his descendants to Hungary—Other alliances of his granddaughters.

WHEN the news reached Italy of the approaching invasion of the French King, no time was lost before the extent of the danger was realised. Pope Leo X was the first to take the initiative, and a league of allies was hastily formed to oppose him, between the Emperor, Ferdinand, the Pope, and Milan. In September 1515, after several minor engagements, the French army encamped to the south-east of Milan, near Marignano, the position being strengthened by canals for irrigation. Maximilian thus tells the story of the battle which followed, in a letter to his daughter:

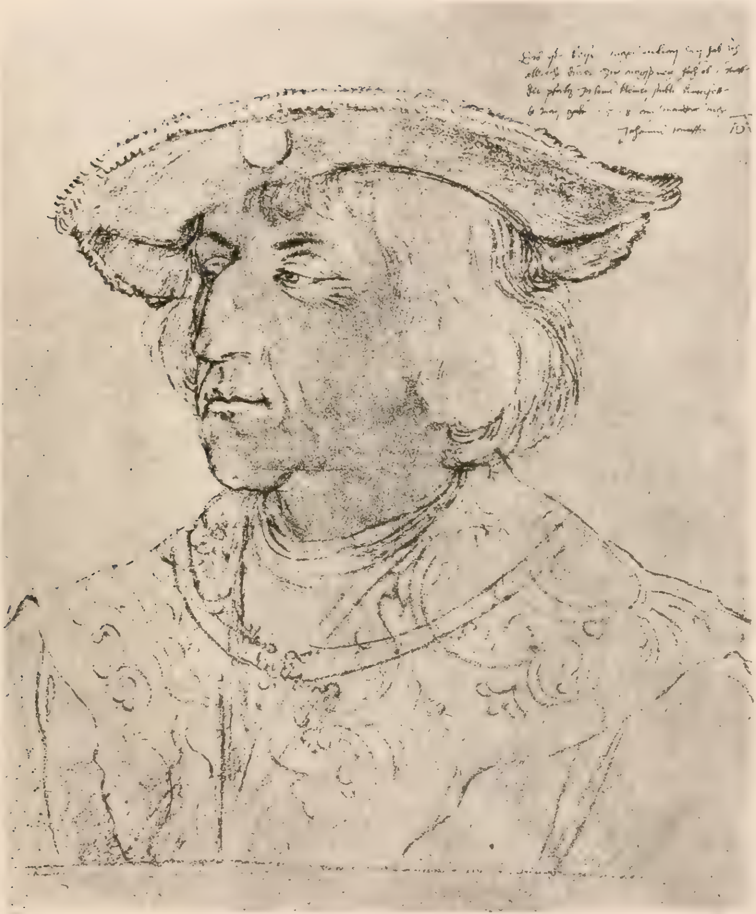
"Very dear and much-beloved daughter,—We have had news from the war; . . . the Swiss left Milan to the number of about 20,000 men on hearing of the French approach, and about four o'clock in the afternoon the fighting began, more by way of skirmish than giving battle, for there were so many ditches that the French men-at-arms on horseback could not help the foot-soldiers, and fought so long that the night surprised them . . . all that night the Swiss and French remained upon the field of battle doing nothing until the morrow, the 13th [of September] when they recommenced the said battle, which lasted three hours, after which combat there remained dead upon the field about three thousand Landsknechte and as many Swiss. . . . Amongst the Swiss there was division and mutiny so that they retreated to Milan and Como, and two days later they returned to their own country. . . ."

We have many records of this eventful battle. It was on Thursday, September 13, that the Swiss set forth towards Marignano, where the French army was encamped in the plain, and strict guard was kept by the Constable de Bourbon, who was in command of the advance guard. He received tidings from one of his spies, that the Swiss had left Milan, and other messengers bringing news that there were clouds of dust in that direction, François I was warned, and put on his splendid suit of German armour.

Meantime the Swiss advanced in silence without trumpets or drums; they began hostilities about four in the afternoon, and the plan of their leader was to take possession of the enemy's artillery, and turn it against them, as they had succeeded in doing at Novara. But when the guns were attacked the Constable, with quick presence of mind, instantly sent forward the Black Bands to the support of the Landsknechte who were in charge of the artillery, and he then threw the two wings of the army on the flanks of the Swiss, himself charging at the head of one of them. The manœuvre was quite successful, for the Black Bands vied with the foreign mercenaries in their impetuous attack, eager to distinguish themselves in the eyes of Bourbon.

Soon the battle was engaged all down the line, and a terrible mêlée followed. The Chevalier Bayard distinguished himself as usual by his gallant adventures, and it was he who had the honour of knighting the young King on the field of battle. As night fell, the two armies lay down to sleep side by side, overcome by utter weariness, in the growing dusk. During those terrible hours of darkness, François I took his rest for awhile on a gun carriage under the care of an Italian trumpeter. The hostile troops were "within a stone's throw of each other, and there was neither ditch nor hedge between them. Thus they remained all night without moving, and those who were mounted sat on their horses. . . ."

At the first break of dawn the battle started again, and was continued with the utmost courage and obstinacy on both sides. The French were beginning to yield, when the arrival of the Venetians under Alviano, turned the tide in their favour. At the same time, Trivulzio threw the Swiss ranks into confusion by flooding the meadows in which they fought. Sixteen thousand brave men were left upon the fatal field, and victory remained with France, although there was scarcely a noble family that had not to lament the loss of father or son. The vanquished Swiss retreated to Milan in broken, straggling



Maximilian I.
Holy Roman Emperor
Albrecht Durer

companies, far different from the gallant array in which they had set forth.

They had returned to their own land when the French King and his army reached the city, which surrendered at once, although the young Duke Massimiliano still defended the Castello. This massive red-brick fortress was considered one of the strongest in Italy, and Bourbon was left behind to besiege it, with the help of Pedro Navarra, while the French King, after receiving the keys of Milan, went on to Padua. Well supplied with food and ammunition, the citadel might have held out for months, but Massimiliano had now no hope of relief, and, after a siege of twenty days, he was induced to surrender. A treaty was signed by which Massimiliano gave up all claim to the Duchy and agreed to retire to France. There he was to receive an annual pension of 36,000 crowns. The unfortunate young prince had no great courage or ambition, and is said to have exclaimed on leaving Milan: "Thank God that I am free from the brutality of the Swiss, the aggressions of the Emperor, and from Spanish perfidy."

Thus ended the public career of the eldest son of Lodovico il Moro, the Swiss leader Schinner having already taken the younger brother, Francesco Sforza, off to Germany with him as his only chance of safety.

Before his return home in December 1515, François I, with his chief nobles, met Pope Leo X at Bologna, and, after much clever negotiation on each side, entered into an alliance with him, regardless of the fact that the Emperor, Spain, and England were preparing another League against the French, alarmed at their success. Charles de Bourbon was left as Governor of the State of Milan, and the King "gave him power over all things as if he were there in person." The Constable immediately set himself to fortify the city effectually, and above all to so arrange the internal government of Milan as to satisfy the inhabitants and ensure their loyalty.

This great success laid the whole of northern Italy at the feet of the French King. He had been able to make his own terms; and he was sure of the support of Pope Leo, as it was his lifelong policy to be on the victorious side, while the Spanish and imperial forces were soon disbanded. Massimiliano Sforza gave him no further anxiety, as he lived in peaceful retirement in France till 1530.

Maximilian did not feel this defeat so much as he might have done, had not his eager, restless mind been full of triumph in the success of a scheme very dear to him. Earlier in this year, 1515, he had received at Vienna the brother Kings of Hungary and Poland, and set the seal to the negotiations of long years. By the Treaty of Vienna, signed July 22, his granddaughter Marie was betrothed to Louis, the heir of Hungary, whose sister Anne was placed in charge of the Emperor until her marriage with his grandson, the young Archduke Ferdinand, could be carried out. He thus made sure of these kingdoms for the House of Hapsburg, and carried out the original treaty of 1463, between King Matthias of Hungary and the Emperor Frederick III. Maximilian had thus won a most important move in the game of diplomacy, and could afford to forget a more distant loss in Italy.

He was an inveterate matchmaker, and had already married by proxy his granddaughter Isabelle to Christian II, King of Denmark, with a large dowry. In August of this year, 1515, Archbishop Eric Valkendorf was sent with a fleet to the Netherlands, to fetch the gentle young princess of fourteen to her sad and disastrous fate. Her friends can hardly have been aware of the character of Christian II, for the Emperor writes a little later, that he is "a handsome and virtuous person of noble condition" who will make his wife very happy in all dignity and honour. But we shall find a very different fate awaiting the unfortunate princess, who had been so tenderly nurtured by her aunt Marguerite.

Maximilian had been anxiously awaiting a suitable match for his eldest granddaughter Eleonora, and now he writes to his daughter that the Queen of Poland is dead, and Sigismund, the widowed King, has been thinking of "Madame Léonore." He would like to know the young girl's opinion on the subject, and there is a charming autograph letter of Marguerite's in reply. The amazing thing is that a young princess should have been consulted in any way about the marriage thought suitable for her. However, fate had quite different plans for "Madame Léonore," which would have astonished no one more than the Emperor himself.

As we shall not have occasion to allude much in the future to the four young granddaughters of Maximilian, in whom he took so deep an interest, it may be well to tell their story at this point. With regard to the two grandsons, the history of Charles V, the eldest, is almost the history of Europe until the eventful hour when he resigned his great possessions to his son Philip and his brother Ferdinand. Weary of the burden of Empire, he retired to end his days in the Monastery of St. Just. As for Ferdinand, in 1522, when he married Anne of Hungary, he had received from his brother the investiture of the five Austrian duchies of Austria, Carinthia, Carniola, Styria, and Tyrol. Later on, to these were added all the imperial possessions in Germany.

Of the four princesses of Austria, Eleonora, the eldest, was married to Emanuel the Fortunate, King of Portugal, in 1519. Her only son, Don Carlos, died in infancy, and she had a daughter, Doña Maria. On her husband's death, in 1523, she lived with her brother Charles V until, after long diplomatic arrangements, she was at last married to François I, King of France, an unwilling bridegroom, after his imprisonment in Spain, and the Ladies' Peace at Cambray in 1529. On her second widowhood, Eleonora returned to Spain, and with her sister Marie, followed the Emperor Charles with loving devotion, to be near him in his last refuge, and did not long survive him.

We have already alluded to the marriage arranged for the second sister Isabelle, with Christian II, King of Denmark. This young princess appears to have had a very unhappy life. Her husband was not faithful to her, and he was notorious for his cruelty on the occasion of the massacre which followed his coronation as King of Sweden. Yet his Danish subjects found him a wise ruler; he reformed the government, and tried to make Copenhagen the centre of the Baltic trade, in opposition to the Hansa League. He was also very strict against piracy, and put an end to the old "wrecking rights." When the Bishop of Jutland made complaint of this, arguing that the Bible said nothing against wrecking, the King replied: "Let the Lord Prelate go back and study the eighth commandment." He evidently had other advanced ideas, for he abolished the penalty of death for witches; he also took an interest in Reform, and asked his uncle Frederick, the Elector of Saxony, to send a theologian of the school of Luther, to preach the new doctrine. Unfortunately when the preacher, Martin Reinhard, arrived, he knew no Danish.

After this, Christian was in bad repute at Rome, and when his enemies combined against him with success, he lost heart, and set sail for Flanders with his wife and children. Isabelle bore her troubles with heroic patience, but she died of a broken heart at Ghent in January 1526, at the age of twenty-five, leaving the care of her three children to her aunt Marguerite, whom she always looked upon as a mother. One of her daughters was the charming Christina, painted by Holbein.

The next sister, Marie, was betrothed to Louis of Hungary in 1514, but her actual marriage did not take place until seven years later, when Louis had been King of Hungary for several years, succeeding on the death of his father, Wladislav VII. After five years of happy married life, the young King had the desperate task of defending his kingdom from the overwhelming force of the invading Turks.

The decisive battle was fought on the plain of Mohács on August 29, 1526, and the Hungarian army, under the gallant but inexperienced prince, met with utter defeat; 20,000 men were slain on the fatal field and Louis lost his crown and his life.

The widowed Queen Marie was chosen by her brother Charles V to be Regent of the Netherlands after the death of their beloved aunt Marguerite, and she performed her difficult task with success.

There is an interesting allusion to her in Roger Ascham's diary, many years later:

"At this town [Tongres] we met the Queen of Hungary posting from Austria to Flanders, having about thirty in her company, for she had outridden the rest; accomplishing that journey in thirteen days when a man can scarcely do it in seventeen. She is a Virago, and is never so well as when she is flinging on horseback, and hunting all the night long."

She was capable of deep affection, as well as being robust in her pursuits, for we know how she devoted herself to her brother in his last days.

The youngest granddaughter of Maximilian, little Catalina, was born after her father's death and remained in the care of her unfortunate mother Juana during all the years of her childhood. Her brother Charles was very kind to her when he came to Spain, and did his best to alleviate her sad position, until at length, in 1524, he arranged a marriage for her with Joam III, the young successor to Emanuel King of Portugal. She seems, like her sisters, to have had many troubles. Of her nine children, all the sons died in early life, except Don Joam, the youngest, whose son, born just after his father's death, succeeded to his grandfather's throne, and Catalina reigned as Queen Regent for five years, until she was driven away by the intrigues of her brother-in-law, Cardinal Henry, and in 1562 retired to Spain to end her days.

It is but a sad story that we have to tell of the four princesses of the House of Austria, so tenderly brought up, and so dearly loved by the Emperor Maximilian and his daughter Marguerite.

CHAPTER XVII

THE COMING OF CHARLES V

1515—1517

Death of Ferdinand of Spain—The inheritance of Charles of Austria—His majority—Adrian of Utrecht sent to Spain—Maximilian again invades Italy—He besieges Milan, then suddenly leaves and returns home—Charles concludes the peace of Noyon with France, 1516—*Marguerite is reinstated as Regent of the Netherlands, by her nephew Charles King of Spain.*

THE year 1516 was crowded with events of great importance for the House of Hapsburg, for Maximilian was reaping the later fruits of his successful matrimonial diplomacy. By the death of Ferdinand the Catholic of Spain, on January 22, 1516, his grandson, the Archduke Charles, came into inheritance of Aragon, the Two Sicilies, Naples, and Navarre, besides the vast, mysterious New World discovered by Columbus. The young prince had already become King of Castile on the death of Queen Isabel in 1504, as by her will she left it to her grandson, with King Ferdinand as Regent, passing over Philippe as an alien and Juana her daughter as incapable of governing.

The youth of sixteen had the previous year been declared " of age " to rule over his inherited provinces of the Netherlands, Burgundy, and the rest of those wide dominions which had passed down to him from

Charles the Bold of Burgundy. He had also been honoured by the Pope, Leo X, with the Golden Rose. Trained with the utmost care for this high position, he had been taught at seven years of age how to sign State documents, at eight to write diplomatic letters to the Pope, while at the same age, by express command of his grandfather Maximilian, he was taken in state to be present at the discussions concerning the League of Cambray, while he was always present at the Councils held by his aunt, the Princess Marguerite. It is possible that Charles may have inherited from his Spanish grandfather his cold impassiveness, his serious caution and reserve, and he certainly reaped the benefit of Ferdinand's strong and capable internal government of Aragon, as well as of his wily and perfidious diplomacy with foreign princes. The King of Aragon had indeed obtained all his desires, but in the hour of his success he had been a miserable man, hated and distrusted by all the world.

He had sold his soul for the aggrandisement of his realm, "plotted, cheated, lied for it," and now his beloved ancestral dominions would only go to swell the immense empire of that Flemish grandson whom he almost hated. Perhaps only in one matter had he been more sincere than the other sovereigns of Christendom—who might indulge in vain talk about fighting the Infidels—while the Spanish King was in earnest and had experience on the subject, for both Castile and Aragon had lived for seven hundred years in a chronic crusade.

On the death of Ferdinand, Adrian of Utrecht had been at once commissioned to act in Spain on behalf of Charles, his former pupil, but the great Cardinal Ximenes was already in possession of the supreme authority by the late King's will, and would brook no rival. In May 1516, he proclaimed Charles King of Spain, jointly with his mother Juana (to whom her father left the crown). The Cardinal also dealt wisely and kindly with Charles's younger brother Ferdinand, who had been the favourite of his Spanish grandfather.

Meantime we must return to Maximilian, who in the spring of this year had already joined in another League against France. The Swiss Cantons were divided in opinion ; eight of them were for peace, but five were eager to continue the struggle. With the help of these and a strong German force, the Emperor once more invaded Italy and threatened the French possession of Milan. Before the end of March, the situation appeared so desperate that the Constable of Bourbon was pressed by the other French generals to surrender, but he declared that he would save Milan or be buried in its ruins. He secured great stores of provisions, ordered the destruction of the suburbs, and the walls were strongly manned with rows of foot-soldiers, crossbowmen behind, and all protected with heavy artillery. He was himself on the watch night and day, with his captains, for fear of treachery, and no meetings were allowed in the city between sunset and sunrise.

The army of Maximilian had advanced without opposition to the very environs of Milan, when news was brought to Bourbon that 60,000 men, with strong artillery, were on the point of an attack. This was on the Thursday before Easter, and the Emperor had expected to surprise and bombard the city before the alarm was given. When he found that this was no longer possible, and saw how well prepared was the defence, he gave way to his usual caution and hesitation, for he was not prepared in any way for a long siege. Bourbon had already caused the neighbouring country to be laid waste, and Maximilian saw no means of obtaining provisions for his mixed host. He was also in want of money, and his mercenaries were demanding their pay. His captains appear to have been in favour of such an attack as would bring a decisive action, but it is quite possible that, considering the splendid preparations of the French commander, he was wise in refusing to risk this.

There seems to be no doubt that the Swiss who fought on the side of France sent word to their fellow-countrymen outside the walls, calling upon them to betray their leader, but the men under Maximilian indignantly refused. However, a suspicious letter was purposely allowed to fall into the hands of the Emperor, who could not help remembering how the unfortunate Duke Lodovico Sforza had been sold to the French by his Swiss mercenaries. We are told that these doubts were strengthened by a dream of the night, in which the Head of the House of Hapsburg beheld his ancestors Leopold of Austria and Charles of Burgundy, grim spectres from their fatal fields of battle, who warned him of coming danger from the treachery of his hereditary foes.

However this may have been, there is no doubt that before daybreak on the Friday morning, he left the camp with a few attendants, who possibly thought he was going hunting, crossed the river Adda, and rode off towards Trent.

He appears to have given some hint of his intention to the Cardinal of Sion, who had been influential in bringing the Swiss, and to Pace, the English Commissioner, and they used every argument in their power to dissuade him; he was even told that "henceforth no man in Germany would esteem him the worth of a groat." Whatever may have been Maximilian's reason for retreat, we may be quite sure that it was no case of personal fear. He was never afraid of anything; he would spring from his horse in the midst of a fierce mêlée, to save a friend, or lead a handful of his men against a mass of great pikes and spears, or dash forward alone to wrestle with a savage wild boar.

But in any case, the result was disastrous. His army, left without a leader, forsook the siege, and turned back across the Adda, pillaging Lodi, leaving behind devastation and destruction until it finally disbanded, the Swiss returning home and leaving to the French and Italians all the cities gained by the Emperor in eastern Lombardy. From this time he scarcely took any further part in the affairs of Italy. England entered into alliance with the Swiss to retake Milan, and Charles, now King of Spain as well as the heritage of the Netherlands and Burgundy, rose to a far more prominent position than his grandfather the Emperor.

Without consulting Maximilian, the young King Charles concluded with the French King, the Peace of Noyon in August 1516, by which he promised to marry the infant daughter of François I, and dispose of Naples by way of this marriage. In November the whole Swiss League concluded a permanent peace with the French, and at last in December, the Emperor came to terms at Brussels, and so brought his nine years' war with Venice to a most unsatisfactory end as far as he was concerned.

He wrote a characteristic letter to his daughter Marguerite, in which he says that he fears no good will come of it, and that there is no use in trusting a people like the French, who have always been full of abuses, dissimulations, and lies, for the last hundred years, and who will continue the same career for another hundred years. He continues by explaining at length that, although these hereditary and natural enemies have been so much to blame, yet he has a most fervent zeal and desire for universal peace, which will enable him to carry out the desire of his heart and set forth to war against the Infidels. At the end of his letter, he alludes to a subject in which he is ever greatly interested, the painting of a "porte d'honneur," in which he hopes that Marguerite will help him with her advice, "that it may be carried out in beautiful form so that to all Eternity it may remain for our and your perpetual glory."

We see how neither failure nor disappointment can long depress his hopeful spirit, nor turn away his interest from his ruling passion, the glory and fame of his race. It is quite pathetic to remember that his greatest success in this ardent pursuit, had really dethroned him in a measure from his own high estate, to raise his young grandson to a splendid and almost undreamed-of height. Still he cannot realise the extent to which his own power is waning, as we find in another letter written about this time.

"Autograph letter from Maximilian to Marguerite, in which he sends advice to the young King Charles.

"My good daughter, thinking night and day about the affairs of my heirs, I have decided, chiefly for the good and honour of my son King Charles, to write to my deputies who are with him certain things concerning their good and that of their subjects. Knowing that you will be required by my said son to accomplish an honourable charge, we desire and we require that you should accomplish it; in so doing you will carry on a thing very agreeable and honourable to yourself, as you will more clearly understand from our deputies, Messieurs André de Burgo and Nycasy. And to God I recommend you. . . .

"Written on March 2 by the hand of your good and loyal father, Maxi."

No doubt this letter was written with regard to his strong wish that his daughter should continue to be Regent of the Netherlands, now that Charles had attained his majority, and would be much away in his kingdom of Spain. When some time later this was ultimately carried out, Marguerite found it more difficult to carry on her government under the rule of her nephew Charles and his advisers, than under the more genial supervision of her father.

The Emperor still continued to seek her help in various matters, such as the appointment of old friends to various offices, or pensions if they were past work; showing constant testimony to his kind heart. He had also always found his daughter's intervention of great use with regard to the King of England, and she is now asked to urgently remind Henry VIII that he has not yet paid a certain sum of 10,000 gold florins, which had been promised some time before.

In the spring of 1517, another diplomatic agreement was made between Maximilian, his son Charles, and François I of France, in which there were secret articles concerning two new fiefs of the Empire. The Emperor was to use his authority to create a kingdom of Lombardy for the King of France, and at the same time a kingdom of Italy, composed of Venice, Tuscany, and other States of Central Italy, to be bestowed upon his younger grandson Ferdinand. It is very doubtful, however, whether any of the princes concerned really expected to succeed in carrying out this preposterous arrangement. In any case, it came to nothing, for the influence of Maximilian was now a negligible power in the affairs of Europe, and it was not until five years later, that his grandson Charles, as Emperor and King of Spain, had the upper hand in the relentless strife between the Houses of Hapsburg and Valois.

Maximilian had failed in Italy, but his diplomacy was successful in securing the rule of his descendants in the east and west, until their lands extended from the North Sea to the Carpathian Mountains, in almost unbroken line. This was effected by the marriage of Ferdinand to Anne of Hungary, for after the tragic death of her brother Louis at the fatal battle of Mohács, in 1526, the crowns of Hungary and Bohemia were ultimately secured by Maximilian's grandson, after a civil war and much diplomacy.

Meantime we must return to Marguerite, Duchess of Savoy, and her position on the coming of age of the young King Charles. She had ruled the Netherlands for eight years with full authority and great success, but she now found that the government was practically taken from her. Willian de Croy, Lord of Chièvres, who had always opposed her plans with scant deference, was now the trusted counsellor of her nephew and endeavoured to exclude her entirely from his confidence. It was a great blow to find herself left out from the Council of State, while she was not even consulted about her father's letters. Some enemy even dared to suggest that she had made personal money profit from her position of Regent, and this was an attack which she could not possibly ignore. She lost no time before drawing up a full and complete account of her government with details of all her receipts and payments, showing what a large proportion of the expenses had been paid from her own private income. As she says in her pathetic letter to her nephew from Brussels :

" Monseigneur, as I clearly perceive that by divers means they try to make you suspicious of me, your humble aunt, after I have so long endured in patience, and they wish to withdraw me from your good grace and countenance, which would indeed be a poor recompense for the services which I have rendered you aforetime; I am now constrained to excuse myself. . . ."

The memorial which she presents is deeply interesting, as Marguerite relates the whole story of her government, touching upon the troubles and anxieties which she has gladly endured in order that the possessions and the subjects of her dear nephew might suffer no loss. Once again we hear of the long strife with the Duke of Guelders, "who broke all treaties and feared neither God nor man." Her own private fortune and her rich dowries were all spent in the service of her nephew, and she points out how she never ceased to labour for peace, and never desired war, as her accusers falsely said. Then she continues:

"Monseigneur, I have served you well and loyally during your minority, not sparing my person or my goods. . . ." She ends with a very full and minute account of the money received at various times from the States of Flanders; a most curious and valuable financial statement, giving a full insight into the pecuniary arrangements of the time. It is most interesting to find on the back of the original document, a note in which Charles himself acknowledges that "Madame is held fully justified . . ." with the names of his Councillors present, thus making all honourable amends as far as possible.

The Emperor wrote a most dignified and impressive letter to his grandson, in which he clearly pointed out all that Marguerite had done on his behalf, her great love and loyalty, and in the strongest language advising him to rely upon her in all things, for he was indeed " her heart, her hope, and her heir." He then speaks of her as one " who, by true blood kinship and by nature, loves our good and honour and yours—we three together, who are united together as one, bound in the same desire and affection. . . ." This letter, which takes so high and noble a tone of dignified affection and mutual trust, appears to have had the desired effect, for when the young Prince Charles made a triumphal progress through the Netherlands, the Lady Marguerite accompanied him, shared in all his honours and was welcomed with enthusiasm by the people. From one city to another they travelled to make those " entrées joyeuses " in which the burghers vied with each other in the magnificence of their welcome.

In the " mémoire " presented by Marguerite to her nephew Charles, we are very much struck with the wholesale way in which every one received presents. Only to mention a few of these is quite a revelation. Thus :

" The Duc de Juliers receives a great silver-gilt cup weighing sixteen marks, which had been given to the Princess by the City of Antwerp.

" To the Comptroller of Calais, who came on an embassy from the King of England, she gives half a dozen cups, two jugs, and two flagons, all of silver, weighing together fifty-five marks.

" To the English ambassadors who had come to treat about the marriage between her and the late King Henry VII, and who were afterwards sent to take part in the Peace of Cambray, she gives: To the Count of Surrey a golden goblet which Madame had in daily use, weighing three hundred golden crowns. Richard Wingfield, a second ambassador, receives twenty yards of velvet, twenty yards of satin, and twenty yards of damask; to the third ambassador, twenty yards of velvet and twenty yards of damask; and to their herald, twenty yards of damask.

"To Cardinal d'Amboise, Legate at the Treaty of Cambray (by advice of the Council), a magnificent golden cup inlaid with wonderful and priceless gems, valued at more than 4,000 golden florins. In fact, the Legate thought it too splendid for a subject to keep, and felt he ought to present it to King Louis XII.

"To the Bishop of Paris a splendid and unique 'Livre d'Heures,' the cover inlaid with gold, diamonds, pearls, and rubies, valued at more than 400 golden crowns."

And so the enumeration continues, until we feel that the poor lady had sacrificed most of the treasures which she had received as wedding presents, and we realise that there was no limit to her generosity and devotion to the cause of her beloved nephew.

CHAPTER XVIII

CONCERNING THE REFORMATION IN GERMANY

1517

Concerning the Reformation in Germany—Invasion of the Turks, Lateran Council, 1517*—Indulgences and Turkish tenths—Luther nails his ninety-five theses to the Church of Wittenberg—Maximilian's protests against abuses in the church—His earnest desire for a crusade against the Infidels and his elaborate plan for their conquest—His enthusiasm is not shared by other powers.*

WE have now reached a period in the reign of Maximilian which is to us of the highest interest and importance, but of which he himself was unable to realise the significance. I refer to the great religious movement of the Reformation, which began with a revolt against the doctrines of the Roman Church and against its abuses. It is interesting to notice that at the beginning it was more a matter of religious feeling in Germany, than in England and other parts of Europe, where it was first guided by political motives. The reason of this was perhaps that the ground had been better prepared in Northern Germany, where the humanistic movement of the Renaissance had not been pagan and æsthetic as in Italy, but had made appeal to the higher religious emotions. At the same time, the

Teutonic spirit of independence had before now defied Papal condemnation, and thus the Roman Church inspired less awe to that hardy northern people during the Middle Ages, than elsewhere in Europe.

We find a striking instance of this in 1455, when the three Spiritual Electors of Mainz, Trier, and Cologne united to complain of the Pope's violation of the Concordat of Vienna, and, " with other Bishops and Princes of the Empire, bound themselves to resist the tithe demanded by Pope Calixtus III, and to send his pardoners back across the Alps with empty purses." But the Head of the Roman Church was then too strong to be thus defied ; he successfully asserted the supremacy of the Holy See, and crushed his foes by crafty policy. Now, sixty years later, the world had changed ; the great cry in the fifteenth century was for reformation of the Church by a General Council, and when the favourable occasion arose, the minds of men were prepared for rebellion.

We are all familiar with the opening scenes of the German Reformation. Leo X wished to raise money for the rebuilding of St. Peter's and other less plausible objects, and, in the usual way, he flaunted before the Christian world, the necessity for a Crusade against the Turks. We know how often this last call to arms had been sounded since Constantinople was taken, in 1453, by Mohammed II. Between 1514 and 1517, the victories of Selim I in Asia Minor, Egypt, and Persia, had made Turkish power and ambition a standing menace to all Europe, while the insolent success of the Corsair raids on the coasts of the

Mediterranean, had roused the passionate indignation of Spain and Italy. Leo X called upon all the sovereigns of Christendom to lay aside their personal feuds and jealousies, and to combine under the Standard of the Cross against the hereditary foe of their Holy Faith.

In March 1517, the Lateran Council was summoned to meet and consider how best the great endeavour could be carried out. It was decided to impose two taxes upon all the faithful sons of the Church. One was to be raised by means of indulgences and the money was to go towards restoring the sacred edifice of St. Peter's, where the very shrine which contained his holy relics was exposed to ruin and decay. The other tax was the famous Turkish tenth, which was to be supplemented by another set of indulgences. There appears to have been much discussion in the Sacred Council, for many of the Bishops there present had serious doubts as to whether the money would be spent on the objects for which it was voted. There was a suspicion that large sums of money had already been borrowed both from the King of France and the great bankers, the Fuggers, to be repaid from the funds raised by the Turkish tenth and the indulgences.[1] However, the mandates were issued both for the payment of the Turkish tenth on all the property of ecclesiastics throughout the world—which of course would be ultimately paid by the people—and also for the traffic in indulgences to an extent hitherto unheard of. Protests against this way of raising money had been long made by pious churchmen throughout the world, who pointed out the injury it entailed on true religion and morality.

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[1] This was proved later by written documents.

It was therefore no entirely new thing when a certain Augustinian monk of Wittenberg, who had the care of a church in the city and was a professor in the University, also made his protest. In the month of October, 1517, this Martin Luther, as a professor of theology, felt himself bound openly to proclaim his feeling on the subject from the pulpit, and the response of sympathy from his audience was immediate. He forwarded an urgent appeal to the Pope that these abuses might be suppressed, and from that moment was looked upon as the champion of the German people against this open scandal. So far, neither Luther nor his followers intended any attack upon the doctrine of the Church, or had any definite thought of schism from the orthodox Faith, although his nailing the ninety-five theses to the door of the great church of Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, has been looked upon as the first open declaration of the German Reformation.

Born in 1483, Luther had been received into the University of Erfurt in 1501 ; after he became an Austin Friar and was ordained, he came under the notice of that broad-minded Elector of Saxony, Frederick the Wise, who remained his faithful friend until death. The future great Reformer paid his famous visit to Rome in 1510, at the impressionable age of twenty-seven, full of reverence and enthusiasm, and knelt before its shrines with all the devotion of a pilgrim. But we know the terrible reaction which followed when he discovered his ideal city of saints and martyrs to be another Babylon of all iniquity, in those darkest days under Pope Julius II. It was in a very different spirit from his eager arrival, full of fervour and piety, that he turned away from the Eternal City, and in after days he would exclaim: "I would not have missed my visit to Rome for a thousand florins, as I should always have feared that I had done the Pope an injustice."

At the same time that Luther affixed his protest to the Church of Wittenberg, he also sent a copy to his ecclesiastical superior, Albert of Brandenburg, Archbishop of Mainz and Archbishop of Magdeburg, a serious and thoughtful man, whose personal wishes would certainly have led him to compromise, although it was chiefly on account of his debt to the Pope, for the enormous expenses of his "pallium," that the sale of indulgences was introduced into Germany. This sale had been entrusted to the Dominicans, at the head of whom was a certain Tetzel, who entered into a public disputation with Martin Luther concerning his theses, which in fact contained nothing that had not already been maintained by many Roman Catholics, although he denied the Pope's claim to infallibility.

While the whole of Germany was roused and startled by these theological discussions—for through the printing press the famous theses had spread far and wide—Maximilian himself played no part in the religious movement, which he seems to have felt was beyond his sphere. Yet the subject was congenial to one who took the keenest interest in all intellectual matters, and he had always been accustomed to discuss theological problems with the most broad-minded freedom. Thus he was wont to consider the temporal dominion of the Pope as an open question, and he often argued that the long fast of Lent should be divided or otherwise alleviated, as too close observance to rules of abstinence did not suit the inclement climate of Germany. He had already urged the authorities of the Roman Church to reform the Calendar, suggesting very much the same improvement as was afterwards carried out by Gregory XIII. The Emperor Maximilian had also long considered the necessity of reformation in the German Church, and a more far-reaching and violent reform of the whole Catholic Church, root and branch. He had serious thoughts of joining Louis XII in the rebellion which he attempted to start against Julius II.

Earnest churchmen had done such things before; in the Council of Constance, the largest gathering ever held for ecclesiastical purposes, one Pope had been deposed and another elected. At the time when Julius II was supposed to be dying, we can see the real reformer's impulse in Maximilian's apparently wild suggestion that he should like to combine the Empire and the Papacy in his own person. This appears strongly in his letter to Marguerite of June 1510:

"That cursed priest, the Pope, will not on any account suffer us to go in arms to Rome for our Imperial Crown, in company with the French, as he fears to be called before a Council by both of us, for the great sins and abuses which he and his predecessors have committed and daily commit, and also some

Cardinals who fear reformation which they sorely need."

The Emperor was so much in earnest about reform, that he once in 1510 asked a friend of his, Jacob Wimpheling, an orthodox theologian and zealous preacher in the Cathedral of Spires, to make out a list of abuses which needed amendment. We might call the pious man's reply quite as strong an indictment of corruption in the Roman Church as even a Luther could produce. These are some of the abuses mentioned:

"That the Popes violate the agreements of their predecessors by dispensations, revocations, and suspensions.

"That the elections of German prelates and the Heads of Cathedral Chapters are interfered with. Also that high offices in the German Church are granted to members of the Roman court before the incumbents are dead.

"The scandal of 'Annates,' a most heavy and unjust tax on each new incumbent of high office. The granting of pastorates to unworthy men.

"The Indulgence trade carried on to obtain money. The Turkish Tenths raised for war against the Turks while . . . no expedition ever sails against them."

The statement of Wimpheling ends with something like a prophecy:

"If such things continue with the drain of German gold to Rome, there is serious cause to fear that the common people, unable to bear this addition to their former grievous burdens, may follow the example of the Bohemians in the last century—rise in arms and separate from Rome."

But with all his boldness, the good man was very discreet and did not advocate any strenuous action. He pointed out to the Emperor that the fear of the Pope's displeasure might prevent the three Electors, who were also princes of the Church, from supporting him. If his anger were aroused, Julius II was capable of placing all Germany under an interdict, which would be unbearable for the people. Who could say whether the Pope might not even depose Maximilian from the imperial throne and set up another in his place, as Popes had done with Emperors before?

With such prudent advice to guide him, in the end the Emperor did nothing. The political situation changed; he became once more the Pope's ally, and for the time reform was forgotten. In the spring of 1518, when the Diet of the Empire opened at Augsburg, Maximilian and the Papal Legate were quite prepared to work in harmony together. There was High Mass in the Cathedral, where the Archbishop of Mainz received a Cardinal's hat, and, with splendid ceremonial, the Emperor was presented with a consecrated sword, while he was exhorted in the name of the Vicar of Christ to conquer Constantinople and Jerusalem, and bring the whole earth under the sway of the Empire and the Church.

In order to carry out this magnificent scheme, it was impressed upon the Diet, both by the Emperor and the Legate, that money must be found for the support of the crusaders. Every fifty householders were to supply, and provide arms for, one soldier, and a tax of a tenth was to be paid by all the clergy of Germany, and a tax of a twentieth by the laity. But the Reichstag was by no means prepared to tamely submit to these demands. They carried on their constant habit, since the middle of the fifteenth century, and refused to pass any vote of supplies to Maximilian without first obtaining redress for their grievances. They also openly declared that in the existing state of popular discontent against the abuses of the Roman Church, any attempt to raise the "tenths" and other charges would not be endured by the "common man."

Still more outspoken was a certain anonymous pamphlet published at the time the Diet was sitting at Augsburg, and from this we can judge of the feelings of the German people on the eve of the great Reformation.

"If the fees sent to Rome for the induction of Bishops could be saved, we should have money enough for this Turkish war." "But do you wish to fight the Turk? You will find our real foe in Italy, not in Asia. Every Christian Prince can protect himself against the real Turk, but the whole Christian world has no defence against the other. Only with gold can you satisfy this hound of Hell; you need no weapon.

"In his own lands, the Pope is richer than any other sovereign in Europe, and still we have to send mules laden with gold to Rome, changing gold for leaden seals [of Papal Bulls], and raising gallows to hang Christ."

Then the writer is so overcome with fierce wrath that he boldly accuses the Clerical Colleges of such unspeakable wickedness as cannot be quoted. One of the Bishops, in the name of his clergy, joined in this denunciation with a very full, long indictment of abuses, ending thus:

"The offices are filled with false shepherds, who seek to skin the sheep instead of feeding them. . . . Now, O Emperor and Reichstag, pray that the Pope, out of fatherly love and the watchfulness of a shepherd, may put an end to these abuses, which would fill a whole volume."

We must remember that such complaints as these were not written by heretics, but by earnest and orthodox men who hated schism and fought against it all their lives. We see clearly how it was that Germany of the sixteenth century was ripe for the Reformation. Indeed there was no country of Christendom which had suffered so deeply from the abuses of the Roman Curia, as the lands which lie between the Rhine and the Elbe. The unashamed hunting for benefices, the corrupt patronage, the multitude of papal officials, of chaplaincies, of greedy accumulation of Church offices in the hands of one man, who may have troubled about none of them; the consequent cruel drain of money from the people, under the name of religion and the service of God, to the utter destruction of all true piety.

In the midst of all this corruption around him, we can truly say that Maximilian was a deeply religious man, full of zeal and piety in his devotions, and honestly anxious to promote the good of his people in every way. But strange to say, he never met

Luther, and gave no heed to his protest against Indulgences. He was a dreamer who never outgrew the eager visions of his youth, and his mind never failed to seek in imaginary hopes and schemes the delight which the real world had never given him. When Pope Leo, in 1517, wrote his specious appeal to all the Princes of Europe to join in another Crusade, perhaps Maximilian was the only one to take the matter in earnest. He sent an enthusiastic answer, and expressed his readiness to set forth at once upon that visionary expedition which was destined never to set sail.

The Emperor was so full of the subject that he applied himself to working out a military plan which would achieve the conquest of the Infidels in the course of three years, and he was so well satisfied with his design that he sent a copy of it to each of the sovereigns of Christendom. He proposed to begin with the conquest of Northern Africa, an expedition which he would head himself, and which would be mainly composed of German troops, for he never believed that any other body of men could be equal to those splendid Landsknechte which he himself had formed and trained. Meanwhile François I of France and Henry VIII of England were to remain at home, keeping watch and ward to maintain the peace of Europe and put down rebellion. Constantinople was to be assaulted and taken by force of arms in the third year.

But Maximilian never went forth on that distant crusade, for a farther journey awaited him, even beyond the unknown confines of that world which he had hoped to conquer. His splendid health and strength began to fail in the year 1517, when he had scarcely reached the confines of old age, for he was only fifty-eight. During the last few years of his life, his heart was set on the accomplishment of two great objects. One, as we have seen, was the realisation of his lifelong hope of arming all Europe against the Turk, that common foe of Christendom. The other, which we shall next have to consider, was his passionate desire that his grandson Charles should be his successor in the imperial dignity.

CHAPTER XIX

RIVALRY OF CHARLES V, HENRY VIII, AND FRANÇOIS I

1517—1518

The coming of Charles, after his majority—He travels to Spain—Dismisses Cardinal Ximenes on his arrival in 1517*—His reception by the people and his difficulties—Corresponds with Marguerite as Regent of the Netherlands—Strong desire of Maximilian that Charles should succeed him in the Empire—Rivalry of the young sovereigns, Henry VIII, François I, and Charles V.*

IT was not until the autumn of 1517, after a permanent peace had been concluded with France, that Charles of Austria at length set forth from the Netherlands and arrived in Spain to take personal possession of his kingdom. He had no easy task before him, and we cannot wonder that this young prince of seventeen did not show the talent for statecraft which distinguished him in later years. Charles had previously sent over as his deputy Adrian Dean of Louvain, his former tutor, a very worthy man, but who showed no more cleverness nor capacity than he did later as Pope. He would have been utterly helpless without the strong aid of Cardinal Ximenes, who had been left Regent by Ferdinand of Aragon.

Soon after his landing in Spain on September 19, 1517, Charles made the great mistake of dismissing the Cardinal before he had even met him, urged to this by the jealous influence of his Flemish advisers. This wise and fearless ruler had shown the utmost patriotism and zeal in his difficult task; he had laboured to make peace between the Flemish emissaries of Charles and the proud Castilians, he had kept the rebellious nobles at bay, he had revoked former unwise grants of Crown lands, and he had shown courage and diplomacy in his defence of the borders, continuing the contest against Barbarossa in Africa, and against the French in Navarre. Ximenes died in less than two months after his abrupt dismissal, and there were not wanting those who said that his end was hastened by the contempt and ingratitude, with which he had been treated by the young King who owed so much to him.

Charles was left to face many troubles, rebellion, weary strife, and civil war in the near future, but the Spaniards were at first prepared to bow down before the rising sun. He was crowned with much outward pomp at Valladolid on February 7, 1518, in the presence of the Cortes of Castile, who in an unprecedented fit of generosity, bestowed upon him the sum of 600,000 ducats, to be spread over three years for purposes of State and government. But a great part of this money was promptly seized by the Flemings, who sent most of it out of the country, and also took possession of all the great offices which had been held by Ximenes. Chièvres became Prime Minister, Jean le Sauvage was made Chancellor, William de Croy, a nephew of the older Chièvres, was promoted to be Archbishop of Toledo, and Adrian received the Cardinal's hat and the supreme post of honour in his former pupil's confidence.

The young King appears to have been much gratified by the stately processions and triumphal entries in which he took part, for he writes at this time in high good temper to his aunt Marguerite, and she thus sends on the pleasing news to her father the Emperor:

"Monseigneur, I received yesterday a letter from the King, my lord and nephew, who is very well and governs with such happy success that it is to his great honour and profit. He is, I understand, thinking of sending his brother Ferdinand from over yonder, about the month of April, which will give me great satisfaction. And with this news, my deeply respected lord and father, I pray God to give you a long life and a happy one."

From Valladolid, Charles travelled on to Saragossa, where the Cortes of Aragon were most unfriendly, and expressed the indignation felt all over Spain at the honours which had been heaped upon the King's Flemish advisers. They contended that Juana was their Queen, and that this foreign boy of seventeen had no right to the crown during the life of his mother. It was only after months of contest and discussion, in which Charles had to grant all the demands of his subjects, that they at length allowed him to be received as joint sovereign with Juana, and they reluctantly granted 200,000 ducats, which they took care to appropriate to the payment of Crown debts. This left Charles practically as poor as ever, and he was in desperate need of money if he was to have any chance in the approaching election of the next King of the Romans.

It was during this trying period, while he felt that he had more than he could manage in Spain, that on August 18, 1518, he wrote from Saragossa to replace his aunt Marguerite as Regent of the Netherlands. This was announced in a formal edict in which the young King made full amends for his former neglect, and restored to Marguerite the care of the Great Seal, the right to sign all acts and deeds, with the appointment of all offices. The edict begins thus:

"We make known the great and singular love, affection, and confidence that we have and bear to the person of our very dear Lady and Aunt, the Archduchess Dowager of Savoy . . . and knowing by true experience the great care and solicitude which she has taken and daily takes for the management and conduct of our affairs in our Low Countries, as much during the time of our minority and youth as since, and even since we have been absent from our said country, without having spared her person or her own goods, we to this same Lady our Aunt, moved by these causes and others, also that she may be so much the more esteemed and authorised, and have better courage and occasion to continue the care of our said affairs as she has done hitherto . . ."

In October 1518, this edict was fully confirmed by letters patent sent to the Council of the States, thus addressed:

"Chièrs et féaulx" . . . "by placing in the signature these words '*Par le Roy. Marguerite,*' she will prove that she has charge of the Seal of our finances, and that she alone will provide and dispose of the offices of our country over here. . . ."

No one was more delighted with this event than the Emperor, who wrote to Marguerite to express his great satisfaction:

"Very dear and most beloved daughter,—We have received your letters of the 25th of October, and by them we understand the honour and authority that our good son the Catholic King has recently made and bestowed on you, of which we are very joyful and have good hope that you will so acquit yourself to the good care, the guiding, and the conduct of his affairs, that he will have cause not only to be content, but will also increase your authority more and more, as your good nephew. In which he could do nothing more pleasing to us. So God knows, and may He, my very dear and much-loved daughter, have you in His keeping.

"Written in our town of Wels, December 12, 1518.

"Your good father, MAXI."

Marguerite makes an allusion in her letter to the coming of Ferdinand, the younger brother of Charles and now a boy of fourteen. In sending him over to Flanders, Charles broke one of his engagements with the Cortes of Castile, who had made him promise to keep his brother in Spain until the succession was assured. This and other matters, especially the friction between the Flemings in power, and the nobles of Spain, did not tend to make his reception in Catalonia more friendly; he was detained at Barcelona for months and had to undergo many affronts before he could obtain a very small and insufficient grant of money.

Meantime each province was jealous of the other, and above all, of the continued influence of foreigners, while there was constant alarm lest the young King should retire to Flanders, and leave Spain to be governed entirely by hated underlings. This anxiety was well justified, for important events were taking place in Germany, which would soon need his presence. With this short outline of the young King's first attempt at government in Spain, we must turn away from his further disastrous adventures, as we are only concerned with the history of Charles during the brief remaining life of his grandfather Maximilian.

Maximilian knew that his days were numbered, for he had always taken pride in his medical knowledge, and he appears to have realised from various signs that his marvellous constitution was breaking down. He had been in failing health since the beginning of 1518. Learned doctors were sent to him from Vienna, but he had no confidence in them. As he tells us in his "Weisskünig," when he learnt the art of medicine in his youth, his teacher told the Emperor Frederick that he had learnt all that was known on the subject. In the famous "Teuerdank" which he wrote he records that twice he saved his life by refusing to follow the mistaken advice of his physicians.

When Maximilian left the Reichstag of Augsburg in the last week of September—two days before the arrival there of Luther—he bade farewell to his beloved city in pathetic words which show that some instinct warned him of his approaching end. "God's blessing rest with thee, dear Augsburg, and with all honest citizens of thine. Many a happy time have we enjoyed within thy walls ; now we shall never see thee more ! "

But although his marvellous physical strength was failing, which had enabled him to hunt and fight in tournaments, and dance from the dawn of one day to the dawn of another, yet his mind was as clear and strong as ever it had been during the fifty-nine years of his adventurous life. His one passionate desire was still for the greatness of his House, and all his energies were devoted to obtaining the succession of his grandson Charles to the Empire. In spite of his former vague suggestions that others might possibly fill the post, for a long time he had decided that nothing must interfere with this crowning honour for one of whom it might already be said that the sun never set on his vast possessions. The knowledge that he himself had not long to live, acted as a spur to his family ambition, and he set himself to the difficult task in desperate earnest.

From his keen knowledge of those with whom he had to deal, he was well aware that there was only one convincing argument to be used with the Electors, and that was the power of gold. One of the most important of these Electors was Frederick the Wise, Duke of Saxony, an old friend and counsellor of Maximilian, who, however, refused to promise his vote for Charles, for he contended that as King of Naples he was unable to attain the imperial dignity.

(In the end, however, he voted for Charles.) In this view he was joined by another Elector, Richard von Greiffenlau, Archbishop of Trèves, always a supporter of France against the national interests of Germany.

However, the day before the Emperor left Trèves he had persuaded four of the Electors to give their consent to the election of his grandson. Two of these were the Archbishop Electors, Albert of Brandenburg, Archbishop of Mainz, also of Magdeburg and Bishop of Halberstadt, a patriotic German and a very powerful prince; the next was the Archbishop of Cologne, Hermann of Wied, who was indebted to the Emperor for his high position. The other Electors were the Count Palatine, Lewis V, Joachim of Brandenburg, believed to be bribed by François I; while the last of the great Seven Electors was the King of Bohemia, who was never summoned excepting to help in the election of an Emperor.

It is quite true that the Golden Bull clearly forbade bribery in every form, but the reigning Emperor was in a position to grant dispensations for even bribery, so that he was in a better position than the young King of France, who had dared to come forward as a candidate, "to the great indignation of all right-minded Germans at his effrontery."[1] The great difficulty with Maximilian was that he had no money for the needful bribery, and that he found it almost impossible to raise any. All his life he had been hampered in every undertaking by poverty, almost inconceivable for his splendid nominal dignity. But as Emperor, he received absolutely nothing and had always been treated with niggardly avarice by the States of his dominions. He was always deeply in debt, and now when money was an absolute necessity for the advancement of the House of Hapsburg, he could only manage to obtain a thousand gulden from the banking house of Fugger, his chief creditor. This was only obtained after repeated applications on the ground that unless they granted it, "his Imperial Majesty would have nothing to eat."

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[1] Dr. Stubbs, "Lectures on European History," p. 43.

The amount promised to the Electors appears to have reached the immense sum of 600,000 gulden, and as Maximilian could not raise it by any sacrifice, Charles would have to procure the amount from the unwilling Cortes in Spain, who strongly objected to their King obtaining the Imperial dignity, as they felt that their country would then sink into an insignificant province of the great Empire.

The Emperor showed a great amount of skill and diplomacy in conducting negotiations for this afterwards successful enterprise; he used his influence to the utmost amongst the younger nobles who were devoted to him; he sacrificed old resentments, as when he removed the ban of the Empire from the rebellious Franz von Sickingen; and he did not scruple to further marriage arrangements, promising the hand of a granddaughter to another German prince. We have already seen the result of all this, in the promise which Maximilian received from four Electors and the ambassadors of another—thus counting five out of seven Electors—to vote for Charles Archduke of Austria, King of Spain, Naples, Navarre and the Indies, Duke of Burgundy, Count of Flanders, of

Brabant, etc., Palatine of Hainault, of Holland, of Zeeland, etc. etc.

Maximilian did not live to see the fruition of all his hopes, but he died in the comfortable assurance that all would be well with his grandson's election as King of the Romans, which was actually carried out on June 17, 1519, at the great assembly of Frankfort. His prudent diplomacy in the marriage arranged for his second grandson Ferdinand, was to result in his possession of Hungary and Bohemia, with ultimate succession to the Empire. It is curious to remember how, in his most extravagant and wildest dreams, Frederick III, the father of Maximilian, unwittingly became somewhat of a true prophet in his device for the flag of the House of Hapsburg. "A.E.I.O.U. *Alles erdreich ist Oesterreich unterthan. Austriæ est imperare orbi universo.*"

The Emperor Frederick himself was at the time a homeless wanderer throughout his own dominions, and the proud motto had no meaning for him. But so strong was the pride of race both in him and his son, and, we must add, so skilful were they both in their marriage diplomacy, that it was not far from coming true in the case of his great-grandson Charles V. There were dangerous breakers ahead for the ship of State at this time when we take leave of Charles, for the times had changed since the accession of Henry VIII of England, when he was the only young King in Europe, to contest with such veteran intriguers as Ferdinand of Spain, Louis XII of France, and the Emperor Maximilian. A few years had placed the governing power of the most important kingdoms of Europe in the hands of three young sovereigns, Henry VIII, François I, and Charles, the greatest in position, who was not quite nineteen. The history of Europe for years to come is the story of their fierce and eager rivalry.

CHAPTER XX

DIET OF AUGSBURG, 1518—DEATH OF MAXIMILIAN

1518—1519

Diet of Augsburg, 1518—*Maximilian's love of Augsburg, and its pleasant life—He was a general favourite—Refused admission to Innsbrück, he went on to Wels in Upper Austria—He calmly faced death and passed away on January* 15, 1519—*Letter of condolence to Marguerite from Anne of Hungary and Marie of Austria—Poetical lament of Marguerite for the death of her father Maximilian.*

IN failing health, and with the desire of his heart still unsatisfied either by his grandson's election, or the starting of a Crusade, the Emperor Maximilian, with his usual gallant courage, showed a smiling face to the world. It is highly characteristic of him that during that last summer when the Diet of the Empire sat at Augsburg (1518), and refused to carry out any of his wishes, it was Maximilian who showed himself the life and spirit of the great entertainments, the banquets, and dances, hospitably given in honour of the Electors, the Deputies, the Ambassadors, and other guests.

Augsburg had always been a pleasant, friendly city to him; he had many friends there amongst the burghers, and their wives and daughters were most loyal and devoted to their beloved Emperor. His courteous, genial manner always made him a favourite with women and he enjoyed their society. It was usual for the ladies to wear veils at the public dances, and it is said that Maximilian asked his special friends to forego the use of them on this occasion, as he had a presentiment that he would never see them again.

When at length the Reichstag closed, in September, it was with a heavy heart that the Emperor took leave of his favourite city and set forth to his familiar hunting-grounds in the Tyrol, possibly with the forlorn hope that he might once more regain his health and strength in the pleasures of the chase, which he loved so well. When he reached Innsbrück, a cruel indignity awaited him; the gates were closed against his company, and the burghers refused to receive him. The Government of the Tyrol appears to have been on the verge of bankruptcy, and had not been able to pay the inn bills which his courtiers had contracted, amounting to 24,000 gulden, several years before. The inn-keepers had therefore declined to entertain his Court.

Now Maximilian was by no means guilty of personal extravagance. He was always most abstemious in his food, and he was quite free from the national vice of drinking too much, notorious amongst the German princes of his day. His chief expenses were for his armour, in which he took great pride as being the most magnificent he could obtain; for everything connected with hunting, horses, hounds, and falcons, and for the maintenance and training of his Landsknechte. He knew that his finances were in a bad way, but he never really took the question of money to heart; he was content to live from hand to mouth, and to borrow when necessary, chiefly on the security of his jewels. But his courtiers were notoriously corrupt, greedy, and extravagant. As a contemporary said of him :

" His counsellors are rich and he is poor. He who desires anything of the Emperor takes a present to his Council and gets what he wants. And when the other party comes, the Council still takes his money and gives him letters contrary to those issued previously. All these things are against the Emperor."

He was robbed by those around him, and money voted for his use rarely found its way to him. He was also generous to a fault, and when his purse was full for the moment, he was ready to share it with those who appealed to his sympathy. In fact he could never cut his coat according to his cloth, and long before the end of his life, he was hopelessly in debt. But notwithstanding this, his anger was so roused against the people of Innsbrück that it brought on an attack of illness, and he could only continue his journey in a litter or by boat for many weary days, until he reached his favourite hunting-castle of Wels, in Upper Austria. When he arrived there, late in November, he was much worse for the journey, and it was soon evident that his end was near.

He had doctors from Vienna, but they could do nothing for him. Before the end of the year he made his will, a most curious document, with minute regard to all dependent upon him, also concerning his burial, and above all with respect to the wonderful tomb which he had been preparing for years, and which had been a constant source of interest to him. The main idea of it was his own, and all the sketches and castings for every detail had to be brought to him for his approval. The design which he ultimately decided upon was a life-sized figure of himself in a kneeling attitude on a massive bronze sarcophagus, having around it twenty-four pictures in relief, showing forth his mighty deeds. But the most curious feature of this wonderful tomb, was the desire of its future inmate to be surrounded in death by all the heroes of his family, in full-sized statues, who could be crowded in, as well as a holy company of about a hundred saints (on a smaller scale), whom he ventured to claim as his kindred. Amongst the heroes, Julius Cæsar and Charlemagne find a place in the Hapsburg ancestry by the complaisance of his learned genealogists, but we can only suppose that Theodoric and King Arthur were chosen as ancestors by Maximilian himself. This immense design was never fully carried out, for want of means, and remains unfinished to the present day—a symbol of most of the visionary schemes of our Emperor. A fuller account of the great work will be given later, when the artistic side of this reign is under consideration.

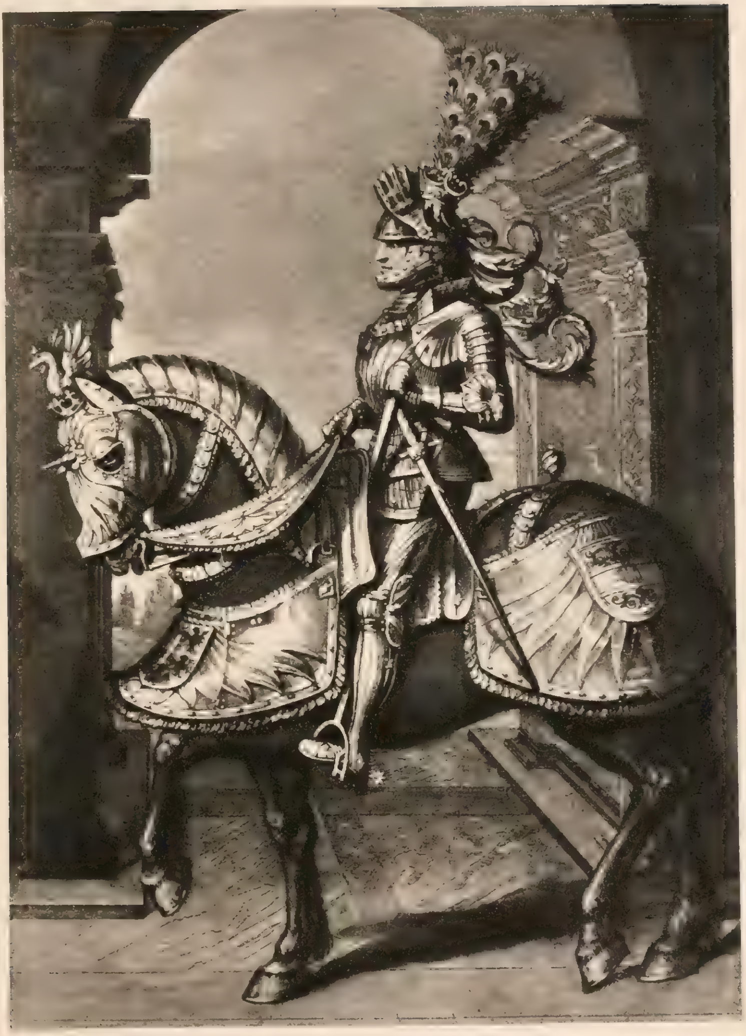
With his usual courage and strong religious feelings, Maximilian calmly faced the approach of death. His eager interest in literature and art, especially in relation to the House of Hapsburg, survived to the last; as well as his warm sympathy with every member of his family. We have already seen the letter, almost the last which he wrote, dated only a month before his death, in which he sends his warm congratulations to his daughter Marguerite on her reinstatement by Charles as Regent of the Netherlands. With splendid unselfishness, the dying man puts aside all thought or mention of his own condition, to rejoice in the well-deserved recognition of his daughter's valuable services. He had recently asked her for a portrait of his grandson Ferdinand, who had now arrived in the Netherlands, and was almost a stranger to his family. The boy's likeness had reached him safely and given him much pleasure.

Maximilian had also had the satisfaction of carrying out lately, in 1518, a marriage for his eldest granddaughter Eleonora with Emanuel, King of Portugal. The marriage arranged for Ferdinand with Anne, the daughter of Wladislav II, King of Hungary, gave him great content, and it was ensured by the Princess Anne being already in his guardianship at Innsbrück. Her brother Louis, the heir of the kingdom of Hungary, was betrothed to Maximilian's daughter Marie, so that the coveted throne of Hungary was doubly secured to his descendants.

Cages of singing birds, and a favourite hound by his bedside, recalled those happy days of his past life, in the woods and hunting-grounds of his beloved Tyrol. He had always been an enthusiastic lover of music, and the attendance of some of his Court musicians had power to soothe his hours of weariness, in this unaccustomed confinement. When restless with mortal illness, the Emperor asked his devoted and learned friend the Doctor Mennel, if there was anything new and pleasant which he could read aloud to while away the long, sleepless hours of the night? Knowing his master's ruling passion for the fame and greatness of his House, the faithful Mennel brought the chronicles of Maximilian's ancestors and legends of the saints of his race, to which the dying man listened with calm content. As the shadows began to close around him, his spirit was filled with visions of that stately company he was so soon to join, and in whose roll-call of honour it was his last ambition to join.

When the end was close at hand, he confessed, and received the rites of the Church with a tranquil mind, perfectly satisfied with his own good intentions, for he and his conscience had always been the best of friends. His kindness and courtesy never failed him; when the penitential psalms were sung by his death-bed, he made a sign with his hand for the clergy to be seated. He passed away before the dawn, with a smile upon his face, and his last wish was that his heart might be buried in the city of Bruges, with the beloved wife of his youth, Marie of Burgundy.

At his death on January 12, 1519, Maximilian was not yet quite sixty years of age, but he was the oldest monarch in Europe. A genial, kindhearted, and generous spirit, he had many friends, and scarcely one personal enemy. Perhaps no one felt his loss more bitterly than his daughter Marguerite, who had always been so loyal and loving to him, and who did more to keep him in touch with reality than anybody else. With rare common sense, tempered by a light touch of sympathy, she soothed his wounded pride while she pointed out how impossible it was for her to



Maximilian I.

Holy Roman Emperor.

[illegible]

obtain the pecuniary help which he required from the States, and she could even humour his vagrant fancy, in discussing the visionary scheme of his combining the position of Pope with that of Emperor. Her deep affection gave her such a real understanding of his character, that she could always influence him in matters of importance, and thus saved him from many serious mistakes. Throughout the long correspondence between father and daughter,[1] we see how close and intimate is their sympathy, and their mutual interest in the younger generation; above all in service and devotion to the interests of the young King Charles—which it is now left to Marguerite to carry on alone.

Amongst the letters of condolence which she received, there is one in Latin from Anne of Hungary, the betrothed bride of Ferdinand, written jointly with his sister Marie, aged fourteen, the promised wife of Louis of Hungary. It is written in Latin, and its expressions of dutiful affection are most charming and appropriate.

"Most Illustrious Princess and Lady, and our well-beloved mother; we greet you with our filial love and pray for the continual increase of all felicity for you. In what grief and in what straits are we both bound, in this our tender age, owing to the sad and bitter misfortune of the death of our late lord, Maximilian Augustus, our lord and noble father, we are unable to set forth through the hindrance of our tears and our grief of mind, which passes all belief. But that which was the will of immortal God should not we think displease us miserable mortals, rather should we place all our hope in the Lord, whose sacrosanct Majesty we dutifully weary with continual prayers for the safety of our father's soul, and also that He will bring quickly to us in safety our illustrious bridegroom and brother, the most renowned King Ferdinand, from whose sweet conversation in this our great and immeasurable grief, we hope that we may win some alleviation.

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[1] Hundreds of original letters of Marguerite are preserved in the Archives of Lille.

"All these things we have thought it our duty to point out to your Highness, who is our most sweet Lady, beseeching her with all our souls that she will vouchsafe to help and aid our prayers that our lord and bridegroom may be informed, and may hasten to turn to us his footsteps to our joy; to whom and to your Highness we again and again commend ourselves, and pray that the Great Architect of the universe may preserve your Highness in all blessings for ever.

"Given at Innsbrück, on the 22nd day of January, 1519 [style of Rome]. Given by the daughters, Anna the Queen by her own hand, Maria the Queen by her own hand."

We are tempted to wonder if some learned tutor or secretary had any hand in this stately Latin letter of condolence from two such very young girls? But there was a touch of nature in their desire for the speedy coming of Ferdinand, "the brother and bridegroom," who was then with Marguerite at

Malines. "Her Highness" was by way of being a pleasing writer herself, and amongst her poems there is a touching lament in verse for her father's death. The following is a simple, almost literal translation.

THE COMPLAINT OF THE ONLY DAUGHTER OF MAXIMILIAN, EMPEROR, AFTER HIS SAD DEATH

If it were possible, Celestial King,
For me to blame Thy deeds and sinless be,
My mouth is ready and my grief consents
As his sole daughter and his only child.
But none may dare to murmur against Thee
Till he have lost alike all hope and faith,
From which God guard me and His patience give,
As from my childhood He was ever wont.
O Atropos! From thee is no defence,
With thy fell dart to ashes hast consumed
The four great Princes whom I loved the best.
Yea, thou hast murdered them before mine eyes.
Two noble husbands were the first to pass,
Whom mighty nations mourned with sorrowing heart,
The Prince of Spain, the Duke of fair Savoy
Than whom the world has seen no goodlier man.
Still that the outrage might more deadly be,
Both Princes in the flower of their age
Were taken from me—one was scarce nineteen
When Death remorseless pierced his youthful heart.
Then Savoy's Duke thou didst conspire to slay,
At three-and-twenty all his days were told.
My only brother was the third to die,
King of the Spanish realms and Naples' lord.
Alas! To smite him with so cruel a blow;
Thou sparest neither prince nor duke nor king.
While for the fourth, O most outrageous Death!
Thou hast put out the flower of chivalry
And vanquished him who first had vanquished all.
Great Maximilian, Emperor most high,
To whom in goodness none may be compared.
Cæsar! My father and my only lord;

But thou hast left him in too sad estate,
Entombed within his castle Nieustadt.

O sacred Majesty, imperial lord!
If any filial love in me there be,
Why doth my heart not break and rend in twain
No more to suffer pain and evil fate!
Did ever lady on this earth of ours
Of such misfortunes meet the fierce onslaught
As I have borne, ah me! unfortunate?
Too heavy for endurance is my fate.
Of every creature, Thou Creator, Lord,
I pray Thee guard my noble House and Race
And me forlorn, who thus laments to Thee;
For I no longer can the burden bear
If Thy great clemency and goodness infinite
Preserve me not the rest of all my life.
I pray Thee from the bottom of my heart,
My God and my Redeemer, that the soul
Of him who was imperial here below
May find a place near Thy celestial throne;
And that his fair fame never may grow dim
Nor be extinguished, nor by ought made less,
But after death in high renown may live,
And his great virtues in his children shine.

In this touching lament, we see the whole heart of Marguerite; her tender love for her father, her pride in his great deeds and high position, undimmed by any memories of weakness and failure. But above all, we see how closely she was akin to him, in her ardent prayer for the continued greatness of the House of Hapsburg, which was almost as dear to her as the salvation of her loved one's soul. Marguerite shows the same eager desire for remembrance and monumental glory as Maximilian, as no one can ever forget who has seen the beautiful Church of Brou with the stately tomb of the Regent of the Netherlands; her own chosen resting-place, with her beloved kinsfolk of the House of Savoy. Of this one of our own poets has written:

> So rest, for ever rest, O princely pair,
> In your high church, 'mid the still mountain air
> Where horn and hound and vassals never come.
> Only the blessed saints are smiling dumb,
> From the rich painted windows of the nave,
> On aisle and transept and your marble grave

CHAPTER XXI

CHARACTER OF MAXIMILIAN—REVIEW OF HIS LIFE

The character of Maximilian—Happy, buoyant temperament—A dreamer with high ideals and ambitions—Various appreciations—Review of his life—His improvements in warfare and armour, etc.—The Landsknechte his master-stroke—His reforms—The Roman law introduced—The Landfriede—Imperial Chamber of Justice (Kammergericht)—Conflicting elements bound into a strong central Government.

THE study of Maximilian's character is full of interest and fascination, for it has that arresting charm which no length of time can dim or destroy. His commanding figure rises vividly before us in all its memorable personality; radiant with the joy of living, that happy, buoyant temperament which no disappointments could sour, no troubles could crush, and which stands out through the shadows of the past, as a symbol of immortal youth.

We see him as Albrecht Dürer sketched him in his later years (1518), with strong, clearly marked features, a keen, piercing glance, and a proud, erect carriage of the head, as of one born to rule and full of gallant courage to the end. When we hear of his pleasant, rich-toned voice, so persuasive in its eager enthusiasm, the winning charm of manner at once so simple and earnest in his desire to please and persuade, we cannot wonder that he scarcely ever made a private enemy and that he was personally the most popular man in his kingdom. His genial courtesy was the same to all alike; to the Princes of the Empire, and to the poorest peasant who met him out hunting, and delayed him with a petition.[1]

Yet notwithstanding all his "bonhomie," no one would have dared to take liberties with him, for he was every inch the Emperor, although his condescension was veiled by his unfailing tact and good-temper. Maximilian was an especial favourite with women of all classes; whether it was a Countess Palatine who found him "the most charming of guests," or the citizens' wives of Augsburg or Nuremberg with whom he joined in banquet or dance; or the peasant women of the Tyrol who took charge of some favourite hounds. Nothing delighted him more than to relieve the dulness of his long Imperial Diets by joining in all the games and pursuits and entertainments of his people. When his skill won the prize with crossbow or arquebus, or any trial of strength, he was joyfully acclaimed as the victor and took all hearts by storm. He was a most kind and indulgent master, trusting all those around him and most unwilling to listen to complaints against them. This was a virtue which he carried to excess, for he was shamefully cheated by his courtiers, and even by some of his ministers.

The Emperor's good-nature became proverbial, and many anecdotes are told of it. It is interesting to find a friendly illustration of this given by Erasmus, who was certainly ranged in the opposing camp, as far as religious matters are concerned. He tells the story in his "Colloquies"[1] of a young courtier who having collected 50,000 florins, only brought 30,000 florins to Maximilian. The Emperor received it without any question, but the councillors who were present persuaded him to demand an account from the young man. Glancing round at the assembled meeting, the nobleman coolly replied that he was quite willing to do so, "if some of those present who were very ready at making up such accounts" would show him how it was done. Maximilian was said to have only smiled at the wit and presence of mind of the rejoinder, and asked for no more.

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[1] See "Das Fischereibuch, Kaiser Maximilians I." Heransgegeben von Dr. Michael Mayr. Innsbrück, 1901. Plate I to page 1.

Luther also alludes to the humorous good-temper of the Emperor, in the following anecdote: "A certain beggar stopped him on his way, and appealed to him for help on the ground that 'all men were brothers.' Maximilian smiled and gave him a penny, with the remark: 'Well, my friend, go and ask all your other brothers for the like sum, and you will be richer than your Emperor.'"[2]

In his "Colloquia Mensalia," Luther has another story to tell of his sympathetic nature. "It was a fine speech of Maximilian the Emperor wherewith he comforted King Philip his son, who deeply bewailed the death of a godly, a faithful, and an honourable man, that was slain in a battle. His words were these: 'Loving Philip, thou must accustom thyself to these misfortunes, for thou shalt lose yet many of those whom thou lovest.'"[1]

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[1] "Colloquies of Erasmus," translated by N. Baily, London, 1900. Vol. ii. p. 177.

[2] "Colloquia Mensalia Luther," p. 411.

Luther never met Maximilian, who left the famous Diet of Augsburg two days before the arrival of the Reformer, who was summoned there to defend himself before the Pope's Legate. He certainly bore the Emperor no animosity and seems to have echoed the universal friendly feeling towards him.

As an instance of this, we are told that when Maximilian was still King of the Romans, he lived for some time at Nuremberg, and entered into the pleasant, friendly life of the city with a genial cordiality, which made him extremely popular. "When about to depart, we are told that he invited twenty great ladies to dinner; after dinner, when they were all in a good humour, the Margrave Frederick asked Maximilian in the name of the ladies to stay a little longer and dance with them. They had taken away his boots and spurs, so that he had no choice. Then the whole company adjourned to the Council House, several other young ladies were invited, and Maximilian stayed dancing all through the afternoon and night, and arrived a day late at Neumarkt, where the Count Palatine had been expecting him all the preceding day."[2]

If Maximilian was a great social success, we cannot claim the same from a political point of view. Thus Machiavelli says of him: "that any one can cheat him without his knowing it." One reason for the frequent disappointments which he met with, is thus described by the Venetian ambassador, in 1496:

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[1] Page 360.

[2] C. Headlam, "Nuremberg," p. 60.

"He seldom or never discusses with any one what he has in hand or does, especially in important matters." This was quite true and was a fatal error of judgment. He would often draw up important documents entirely with his own hand, without consulting his ministers, or discussing the matter with foreign ambassadors, so that they were indignant at being constantly taken by surprise.

Another serious defect as a ruler was his want of perseverance in a scheme begun, which may have arisen from the fact that on further consideration, he saw both sides of the question. Still, to the world it gave him a reputation for inconstancy of purpose and often had disastrous results; as on the two occasions when he raised the siege of Padua and later of Milan, without giving notice to his allies or his own generals. It was this apparent fickleness of temper which made King Ferdinand say: "If Maximilian thinks of a thing, he also believes that it is already done." Another criticism of his conduct is that of Louis XII: "What this King says at night, he does not hold to the next morning." And Quirini, the Venetian Ambassador, writes: "In this way he springs from one decision to another until time and opportunity are past, and thus he wins from all men a light enough reputation."

"He took advice of nobody and yet believed everybody," and his emotional and capricious nature had no chance in statecraft against the deeply politic and greedily self-seeking princes of Italy, who too often used the trusting Emperor as their tool. If he was not much more successful, as a rule, in the character of general than in that of statesman, yet he was a high authority on all matters of horsemanship, fortification, and artillery, in which last his inventive genius made great improvements. He devised a method of making cannon portable, and had light field-pieces constructed which were as useful in pitched battles as the heavy cannon were in besieging fortified walls and castles. He also did much in improving his cavalry by lightening their armour and weapons, in contrast to the heavily laden horsemen of Italy and France. But his greatest triumph was in organising the German foot-soldier into those splendid companies of Landsknechte which soon became the terror and admiration of all Europe. This great work he began in the early days of his Burgundian wars, when he had to do with undisciplined and disorderly men, whom he trained with such zeal and skill; until his infinite patience and devotion were rewarded by their growth into the finest soldiers in the world.

He discarded again here the heavy armour so cumbrous for the medieval soldier; he rejected the heavy, useless shield, and chose for the chief weapon, an ashen lance often eighteen feet long—which made such a forest of spears when his men were in close array, that they could defy the onslaught of cavalry. A certain number of his company retained their halberds, and others were armed with the lightest form of firearms that could be made at that time. The result was excellent, and the men were passionately devoted to their lord and would follow him anywhere to death or victory. As an Italian writer said of him:

"On no general can the soldier rely more implicitly, from none can he expect more boldness in the courting of perils and more skill in meeting them; nor can the burgher wish for any juster or milder prince, or one in whom justice and mildness are so equally poised."[1]

Machiavelli also gives him credit for his warlike qualities when he says: "The Emperor is a great general; he bears fatigue like the most hardened soldiers; he is brave in danger and just in governing . . . ." Vettori speaks of him as "most wise and circumspect, skilful and untiring in war and widely experienced." The result of such magnificent personal courage and wise military instincts is seen in a remark of Louis XII. One day a courtier of his who wished to please his master by disparaging Maximilian, scornfully exclaimed that after all, this Emperor was only an alderman of the city of Augsburg. The King replied: "Yes, but every time that this alderman rings the tocsin from his belfry, he makes all France tremble."

Maximilian was a man endowed with rare gifts both of body and mind, combined with so much energy and vitality, that we cannot wonder at his passionate desire for every kind of distinction. A splendid horseman and an adept at all knightly pursuits, he was as eager to be first in tilt and tournament as to show himself the bravest and most adventurous of huntsmen. There are amazing traditions of his wonderful strength ; he could send an arrow through a wooden plank farther than any one else, he could break a horseshoe with his hands ; unaided he could slay a great boar with his sword, and he could spring from his horse, pick up a wounded man and remount with him. Pirkheimer relates how once, in the Swiss war, when the soldiers were exercising, Maximilian hastily dismounted, saying that he would try his hand, and did better than any of the gun masters in shooting with the cannon.

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[1] Ludovico Ticiano.

He hated idleness, and when other men would be content to enjoy their leisure, his active mind was ever busy with some new problem, if it was only to show an armourer in Innsbrück how to fit a new kind of screw to a cuirass ; or to invent a fresh bit for use with a hard-mouthed horse. He quite agreed, by the by, with that soldier of fortune, the first Sforza, about the serious danger of a hard-mouthed horse. In everything connected with his stables, he took the greatest personal interest, and when he was asked why he did not leave such matters to his Master of the Horse, he made reply : " A nail holds the shoe, a shoe holds the horse, a horse holds the man, a man holds a castle, a castle holds a land, and a land holds a kingdom." [1]

We shall dwell elsewhere on the Emperor's literary and artistic pursuits, but even in these practical matters, we see that he used his brains as well as his physical strength and skill. This keen interest in everything had its dangers, for it produced a certain restlessness of mind which does not conduce to the highest wisdom or efficiency. Maximilian always saw his own deeds through a rosy glow of perfect satisfaction, and nothing could ever shake his happy confidence in himself which probably formed the root of his buoyant nature.

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[1] " Weisskünig," p. 106.

Unfortunately he was always checked in his vast and magnificent schemes of war and policy, by a deplorable want of money ; so chronic in his case that in Italy he bore the name of "Pochi denari!" It was undoubtedly for this reason that the Holy Roman Emperor actually served several times as a paid condottiere for Venice, Milan, and even for England. But he cannot be blamed for such service, as beyond the revenues from Crown lands, and certain mines and tolls which were always deeply mortgaged, he had no means which he could rely upon, for he could not raise a penny without the consent of the Diet, where the Estates vied with each other in stormy disputes of every demand, and constant niggardly refusals. The Electors had no sympathy with his broader aims, and cared nothing for keeping up that imperial dignity and prestige, which to him was of first and crucial importance. If, with the utmost difficulty, the Diet was induced to grant any money, they made a point of only doing so on condition of claiming certain rights. Against this, Maximilian at first protested, but soon, with his usual versatility, he began to study seriously the question of Reform, and became a strenuous advocate for it ; so that during his life he succeeded in carrying out many important changes, which laid the foundation of the future liberty of his country.

Besides the introduction of Roman Law, of which he was early to realise the value, he devoted himself to the reconstruction of the form of government in his Austrian lands. In the place of the old Feudal customs, he instituted a more modern system of administration by permanent officials, which enabled him, amongst other matters, to obtain his revenue without the former constant friction.

It was in 1485, at the Diet of Frankfort, that Berthold of Mainz warmly supported the long-talked of "Landfriede," the Public Peace which was so greatly needed in the days when private war was ever breaking out between neighbouring lords, at the slightest provocation. Robber knights laid in wait for merchants travelling in charge of their goods, and the great princes, instead of upholding the claims of justice, upheld these brigands in their lawlessness. This most desirable Landfriede was ultimately made law by Maximilian's efforts; it was more carefully carried out in detail, and, at first only voted for ten years, was made perpetual. Private war was forbidden within the Empire, under penalty of the imperial ban. All men dwelling within twenty miles of the breaking of the public peace, were bound to interfere and see that the law was obeyed. If they failed in their efforts, the Diet was compelled to interfere, and law thus took the place of violence.

The Imperial Chamber or Kammergericht was founded to act as a court of first instance for all subjects of the Emperor. But its jurisdiction was limited to cases of prelates, nobles, knights, and towns among each other. There was a Judge chosen by the Emperor, and sixteen other members, "half of knightly birth, and the other half, learned in the law." The Court was to sit permanently at Frankfort on the Main, and besides other important rules, the Judge had the power of proclaiming the ban of the Empire, in the name of the Sovereign.

In consideration of Maximilian having made these concessions to the cause of Reform, the Diet instituted the "Common Penny." This was an early attempt at regular taxation; a tax of half a gulden being levied on every five hundred gulden, and for the poorer classes, every twenty-four people above the age of fifteen contributed one gulden. But this plan did not prove very satisfactory, and came to an end during the reign of Charles V.

All these and other institutions made for order and progress, and although, notwithstanding the strenuous efforts of Maximilian, no very great result was obtained at the time, yet a higher ideal was set up, and to some extent realised by later generations. The example set by Maximilian in ordering the government of his Austrian lands was followed by his vassals of every degree, with the result that the more powerful princes became peaceful rulers of civilised States, while the knights in their mountain castles or elsewhere, gave up the old habits of fighting and robbery. But the most notable result is shown in the wonderful growth of the towns, which Maximilian first helped to foster in every way. The population of Nuremberg was doubled during the sixteenth century, with greatly increased comfort and a higher standard of living and thinking. The Reformation, that great spiritual revolution, was to give new strength to the national idea, giving Germany fresh motives for independence. It was due to the influences of Maximilian's time, and in no small degree to himself, that in the long years to come, there remained a German nation which had handed on the great traditions of the past.

This may not have been the Emperor's definite aim, as he has been blamed for thinking first of the House of Hapsburg, and only in the second place of Germany as a whole. With his early training this was inevitable, and the fact that his father, Frederick III, did not achieve greater results, only made Maximilian more intent on forwarding the greatness of his race. Indeed as we look back upon the history of Germany, we are disposed to agree with him that the steady building up of a powerful hereditary kingdom was the surest way to raise his position of Emperor, and therefore of combining the conflicting elements into a strong central government. We know that his enthusiastic belief in the majesty and might of his House was the dominant principle of his life from beginning to end.

More than ever is this ruling passion strongly impressed upon us, when we reach the study of Maximilian's numerous books, which are all for the most part bound up with the honour and glory of the House of Hapsburg, of which even his own future fame as a writer is but another episode.

CHAPTER XXII

STUDY OF MAXIMILIAN'S WORKS: THE "WEISSKÜNIG," ETC.

Maximilian the author of many books—The "Weisskünig," which describes events in the life of Frederick III; His own youth, education, and life, illustrated by quaint woodcuts of Burgkmair and other excellent artists—"Dangers and Adventures of Teuerdank"—Amazing romantic history described—Hunting and other Adventures—Also interesting "Sporting Chronicle" of the Emperor—The keen delights of hunting.

WE have now before us another view of the many-sided character of the Emperor Maximilian, in which he appears as a most voluminous author, who suggested and planned nearly a hundred books and monographs, and actually himself achieved, or had carried out under his direction, a great number of literary works. Amongst these we may enumerate studies on religion, history, genealogy, and the heraldry of the House of Hapsburg, on the art of war, artillery, theology, music, the occult sciences, and sport of every kind.[1]

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[1] Le Glay gives the following list of the works of Kaiser Max: "Grab, Ehren, Weise Künig, Teuerdanck, Freydanck, Triumph Wagen, Stamm Cronick, Der Stamm, Artalerey, die sieben Lust-Gezirck, Wappen-Buch, Joegerey, Valcknerey, Kücherey, Kellnerey, Fischerey, Goertnerey, Baumeisterey, Moralitoet, Andacht St. Jüigen" ("Correspondance," vol. ii).

Maximilian was the first of his race to show any interest in literary pursuits, and the enthusiasm with which he devoted himself to art and learning, heartily encouraging the new spirit of the age, caused him to be welcomed by the scholars of the time as the ideal Emperor of Dante's vision. Before reaching this broader view of the new culture in Germany, it will be interesting to study some of the writings for which Maximilian himself is responsible.

He was extremely fond of history, delighting also in the reading of romances, and we trace this double influence in his work, for his chronicles dwell almost entirely on the exploits in time of peace and war of great kings, and do not attain to the modern idea of history as concerning the social and political growth of the whole nation. Thus in the "Weisskünig," one of the earliest and most interesting of his books, we find in fact a prose romance, which professes to give an account of the "principal events of the life and reign of the Emperor Frederick III and his son the Emperor Maximilian I." This chronicle is extremely characteristic of the writer, for it shows him exactly as he desires to appear in posterity, in the "fierce light which shines upon a throne."

It is expressly dedicated to his grandsons "in order to present to them the example of a King ruling in the fear of God, that they might follow in his footsteps." It was long thought to be chiefly the work of his secretary, Marx Treitzsauerwein of Innsbrück, but the editor[1] of the final edition positively affirms that "What we have of the 'Weisskünig' is unquestionably the personal work of Maximilian himself, with the possible exception of a portion of the first and second parts." We can quite understand that with the many demands, personal and political, on his time, he would often simply dictate a rough copy to one of his secretaries.

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[1] Mr. Alwin Schultz.

In the earlier part of this history, we have already had occasion to quote parts of the Weisskünig, describing the education of the young prince, and an account of his wonderful proficiency in all branches of learning. In that glowing record we see how firmly convinced Maximilian was that he could do almost everything better than any living soul; his only rivals would be some few amongst the famous dead. In short, if it does not show us the man he was, it is illuminating in so far as it shows us the man he thought he was.

But the great charm and value of the "Weisskünig" consists in the beautiful illustrations to the text, two hundred and fifty exquisite woodcuts and engravings, of which more than a hundred were by the hand of Hans Burgkmair, one of the most distinguished artists of the Augsburg School. Every event described in the "Weisskünig" stands like a vivid scene before us, as for instance in the picture of "The King of the Steel (Charles of Burgundy), and his only daughter Marie." Here we see the Duke sitting on a kind of carved throne under a brocaded canopy, in flowing robes, a diadem on his head, holding out his hand and evidently addressing Marie, who stands before him in the quaint costume of the period, the long sweeping skirt, the sleeves of some stiff rich material puffed at the shoulder and the elbow, the hair in braided bands on each side of the face and surmounted by a small diadem, to show her rank. The floor has a bordered carpet, and the back of the picture is filled with a long broad settle, hung with tapestry and laden with cushions; probably exactly the kind of chamber which Maximilian had before him, when he entered into every minute detail with the artist.

Or again the charming woodcut, in which "Maximilian, the young Weisskünig, tells his father, the old Weisskünig, that he has received a message from Marie of Burgundy." Here the room has a curious open fireplace with a carved canopy above it, from the centre of which hangs a massive chain. There is a window of two high narrow divisions, the woodwork inlaid like the fire canopy, and through the panes we see two tall trees and in the distance the turreted walls of the city. Maximilian stands before his father in a wonderful great stiff mantle, with big hanging sleeves. He is turned somewhat away, so that we see the mass of fair wavy hair reaching to the deep embroidered collar, and he has a jewelled cap on his head. The old King partly faces us in a mantle like his son's, but much longer, and sweeping on the ground. He has a long white beard, and wavy white hair surmounted by a crown. Both the princes wear the collar and ornament of the Golden Fleece. There is a group of courtiers on either side of the room, dressed in the gorgeous dress of the period, most of them talking among themselves. They all wear curious flat wide shoes with bands across.

All the pictures, whether by Burgkmair, by Leonhard Beck or others, are extremely careful in the minutest details, which no doubt Maximilian himself suggested and criticised. Another very delightful woodcut is called "Maximilian and Marie de Bourgogne teaching each other German and Flemish." The two young married lovers are seated on a raised platform, apparently of carved marble, in the midst of a charming garden. There are trees and a fountain in the background, while possibly as a kind of allegory of love and happiness, three devoted pairs of lovers are seen in various parts of the garden. As for the Archduke and the Princess, they are seated in the foreground at a little distance apart, taking the mutual lesson very seriously. Maximilian is wearing his great kingly mantle of stiff brocade; he is bareheaded, with his long fair hair spreading over his deep collar, and from the gesture of his hands, one can see that he is doing all the talking, while his bride sits in a listening attitude. Her brocaded dress is simply made, compared with the fashionable ladies in the background, and she wears the characteristic tall pointed head-dress, with a broad band turned over near the face.

There is the picture of the Emperor Frederick's deathbed, treated in a simple pathetic manner; another woodcut represents the little Princess Marguerite, the daughter of Maximilian, being "Given to the 'blue King,' Louis XI of France." She was only three years old at the time, but is represented in a trailing Court dress of brocade, with the same pointed headdress as her mother wears, in the picture mentioned above. A very fine group of Flemish lords and men-at-arms is placed behind the child Marguerite, who looks up bravely at the old French King, with his splendid courtiers in attendance. Other interesting woodcuts represent a "Camp fortified with baggage waggons," a curious picture of "The blue King, Louis XI, taking counsel how to attack the young Weisskünig (Maximilian)," where the King is seated on his throne with his counsellors standing by his side. There are also very exciting pictures of hunting and hawking, of Maximilian learning cannon founding, and many others, of which these are but a few casual specimens from a veritable mine of wealth. The "Weisskünig" was carefully revised and corrected by Maximilian in his later days, but it remained unfinished to the last, and was not actually published until one hundred and fifty years after the death of its imperial author.

The only one of his literary works which saw the light during his lifetime was: "The Dangers and Adventures of the famous Hero and Knight Sir Teuerdanck," which was privately printed on parchment in 1517 at Nürnberg, by Melchior Pfintzing,"[1] his secretary, and published in a sumptuous edition in 1535. This great epic poem was begun twelve years earlier, in 1505, and is written in strange halting German verse, composed and worked out by three secretaries, Pfintzing, Treitzsaurwein, and the Councillor Sigismond von Dietrichstein, from the dictation and notes of Maximilian, which he constantly changed

[1] Provost of St. Sebald's, Nuremberg.

and criticised. It is difficult to read, for of the various dialects used at the time, the Court language was selected, such as Martin Luther had to deal with when he translated the Bible. We are authoritatively told[1] that "the Emperor himself was the chief redactor of the poem. He himself gave the contents of each chapter, and not only those in which his different adventures are told, but also those which simply adorn the poem with mystic and didactic passages. It is certain that without his consent no verse of the poem and no illustration was sent to the printer. And finally, he settled the order of the separate chapters."

The plot of this romantic history is intricate and involved, by its highly allegorical form, and describes all the difficulties which delayed the marriage with Marie of Burgundy. The historical facts are familiar to us; it was on Sunday, January 5, 1477, that the great Charles Duke of Burgundy fell on the fatal field of Nancy, while it was not until August 17 of the same year, that Maximilian at length managed to arrive in Ghent, where his promised bride had been in such serious peril, that he very narrowly escaped losing her altogether. Now it probably occurred to him that, in his otherwise blameless career, such almost criminal delay required some explanation, and the romance of the Ritter Teuerdank appears to have been written to justify the laggard lover.

This is the story. A great King of fabulous wealth and power, King Romreich (otherwise known as the King of the Flaming Iron), has one most beautiful and virtuous daughter, who is to marry the most noble and deserving of her galaxy of suitors. On her father's violent death, the fair Princess Ehrenreich learns that by his will the Ritter Teuerdank is her chosen husband. She sends a letter to summon him, and with the blessing of his royal father, he sets forth on his journey, with one faithful friend, Erenhold. It must be remarked here that this trusty comrade, who appears in almost every one of the hundred illustrations, is always standing calmly by in the picture, apparently with a saintly and marvellous power of detachment. He constantly sees his beloved prince in deadly peril, but he makes no attempt to help him, possibly because he knows that all must end well, and that he is only required as a witness to the amazing adventures which befall his friend.

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[1] M. Senior Luschitzing.

For meantime, the Evil One has set himself to delay the prince and lead him astray ; and he makes use of three captains,—Fürwittig or Bad-luck, Umfals (Rashness), and Neidelhard (Jealousy), who all make plots for his destruction. We cannot help thinking that poor Teuerdank shows wonderful trust or stupidity, when it takes twenty-four dangerous adventures to show how evil were the counsels of Fürwittig. These are all illustrated by the most fascinating and humorous woodcuts, chiefly by Leonhard Beck, with some by Burgkmair and others. With his passionate love for hunting, Maximilian takes this opportunity of describing a great number of adventures which he may have met with in the mountains of the Tyrol. We have the most dangerous single-handed contest with ferocious wild boars, the most hair-breadth escapes while hunting the chamois in impossible places. Some of these stories are still preserved in the traditions of the Tyrolese villages. Thus No. 20 of Teuerdank is commonly reported in this way.

On a certain Easter Monday, Kaiser Max was staying at Weierburg, in the Ober-Innthal, when he resolved to set out on one of his favourite hunting expeditions on the Zirlegebirge. He was stalking a chamois which suddenly led him down to a sheer precipice on the face of the Martinswand. It was a most dangerous place, for the rocks were terrible, but when the Emperor found himself on the steep and awful descent, the ardour of the chase still carried him on. Unfortunately the nails in his hunting-boots were almost all torn out, before he reached a rocky ledge, scarcely a foot in width, where he could neither take a step forward or back. Max stood here astounded and bewildered, with no prospect before him but a fearful death. Teuerdank continues:

" It was impossible for help to reach him from the mountain-top above, by the perilous way he had come, and there was no help from below, more than a thousand feet down, where his lords, who could do nothing, watched him with weeping eyes. . . . In this deadly peril of his life, he remained for two whole days and nights, with no hope of rescue. And in order that the life of this present time might pass into the blessed and heavenly life, he called upon his followers in a loud voice and commanded them that, by priestly hands, the Most Holy Sacrament of the Body of Christ should be brought to the nearest spot [this appears, from tradition, to have been the top of the Martinswand], so that if his dying body could no more be fed with mortal food, yet his heart and soul might be nourished through the Heavenly sight.

"The pious prince was obeyed with all diligence, and in all the towns and villages near, universal prayer was offered up for his rescue. The answer to these petitions was not long delayed. When Maximilian on this monstrous mountain found himself cut off from all human help, and there was nothing for him but to turn to the Immortal God, his Redeemer . . . of a sudden he beheld near him an unknown youth in peasant dress, who approached him with out-stretched hand. . . . 'Be thankful, my dear Prince, that your fear of God and your virtue have been seen by Him, and now, put your trust in Him Who can help you and follow me, for I will take you down safely.' They descended, and when the ground was reached, the guide disappeared and was seen no more." In memory of his wonderful escape, Maximilian caused a great crucifix to be raised on the spot.

Should any one doubt the truth of this story, let them make a pilgrimage to the Schloss Ambras, near Innsbrück, where amongst the treasures is the monstrance in which the Host was carried by the priests of Zirl, when they celebrated Mass for the comfort of the Emperor on Martinswand, and offered up prayers for his deliverance.

In Canto 24: We see how after his inconsiderate deeds of youth, the heroic Prince Teuerdank leaves Fürwittig behind, and is himself once more. We next find the tempting fascination of travel and adventure—appealing to the man who was just growing out of the youth—personified by the allegorical personage Umfals, who takes the place of Fürwittig in leading Teuerdank into danger. We have more perils by land and sea, by swollen rivers and mountain avalanches and other fearful dangers, hunting and climbing accidents, the meeting of two lions in Utrecht which had escaped from their den, but are driven back by the sword of Teuerdank. There are cannon which explode, ships which are almost wrecked, perils by fire and water, but through them all the young hero continues to distinguish himself. Not until Canto 74, are his doubts awakened concerning Umfals, whom he drives away from him, only to be persecuted to the end by Neidelhard, who represents Jealousy, the deadliest of unseen enemies, and leads the young Prince into still more fearful risks and entanglements. The gallant Teuerdank passes victorious through every ordeal, by the grace of his inward virtue and the mighty strength of Love. One more trial awaits him, for he receives a message from his Princess and is also led by a heavenly guide, to lead a Crusade against the Infidels, whom he promptly conquers and they become his vassals. Not until all this is accomplished does the gallant young Prince at length arrive, in a halo of honour and glory, to the Court of Ehrenreich and is rewarded by the happy marriage with his Princess. So ends Canto 100.

This romance was very popular in its day, and four splendid editions, with the wonderful illustrations, were published at intervals after the death of Maximilian. So large a proportion of the adventures in this work have to do with hunting, that it will be convenient to make mention here next in order, of a most interesting book recently discovered, the "Geheimes Jagd-buch,"[1] Maximilian's "Sporting Chronicle." Some writers affirm that this is the only book written by his own hand, while others say that it was written under his direction by his Master of the Game, a Carl von Spaur, 1499–1500. In any case this was certainly one subject concerning which Maximilian did not have too high an opinion of his own knowledge and skill, and on which he was probably better qualified to speak than any one else. This book again is enriched with fascinating illustrations, and tells the story of Kaiser Max's keen enjoyment of sport in the mountains of North Tyrol.

Perhaps at the present day, we can hardly conceive the passion for sport which was so universal in those days. As Michelet says:

"Toute la joie du manoir, tout le sel de la vie, c'était la chasse; au matin le réveil du cor, le jour la course au bois et la fatigue; au soir le retour, le triomphe quand le vainqueur siégeait à la longue table avec sa bande heureuse."

Indeed so excellent and perfect was this enjoyment of the chase, that the enthusiast who wrote the popular handbook of that day, "Phœbus on Hunting" (Gaston de Foix), looks upon it as almost a heavenly joy, and declares that:

"There is no man's life less displeasable unto God than the life of a perfect and skilful hunter, or from which more good cometh. The first reason is that hunting causeth a man to eschew the seven deadly sins. Secondly, men are better when riding, more just and understanding . . . for the health of man and his soul. For whoso fleeth the seven deadly sins as we believe . . . he shall be saved, therefore a good hunter shall be saved."

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[1] Beautifully printed by Thomas von Kurajan, 1859, 2nd edition. With modern German translation.

As we study his Hunting-Book, we feel sure that this was the Emperor's faith. The fresh pure air of the mountains and the woods breathes in every line, and we share his delight in the splendid vigour and skill with which he pursues the chamois to the mountain-top, or single-handed, with only his hunting-sword, faces a wild boar at bay in the swamp. The Book contains a full and carefully revised list of all the hunting preserves and places of shelter in each neighbourhood, drawn up by game-secretaries who personally visited and explored all the glens and fastnesses. We also have the most minute details concerning the suitable dress, food, and conduct while hunting, besides a full list of all the chamois and red deer to be found in any of the localities mentioned.

As for dress, we have a striking picture of the Emperor himself when he received the Duke and Duchess of Milan near Bormio in 1496. He arrived at the old Benedictine Abbey of Mals in the early morning, with the gay music of hunting-horns, the party led by a hundred soldiers on foot with long lances, then fifty German lords in hunting garb, with falcons on their wrists. Maximilian followed, a stately figure in his simple grey cloth tunic and purple velvet cap, a lion's skin hanging over his thighs and the badge of the Golden Fleece on his breast. He always enjoyed combining diplomacy and hunting, and once when he had to meet the Venetian ambassadors, he suggested giving them a little sport on the way.

The letters to his daughter Marguerite are full of allusions to this passion of his life. In February 1508, he writes her a delightful invitation in Latin to come and join a hunting party at Urach, a little town in Swabia with a fortified castle. When the Princess is requested to write to Henry VIII to solicit the pardon of the Duke of Suffolk, she is also to request that the King " will give our fair nephew, the Duke of Würtemberg, two handsome female dogs and one male." Maximilian takes as much interest in the appointment of a new master of the wolf-hounds (louvetier), as in that of a bishop. When he retires with his army from Italy in 1510, he looks forward to " taking a stag on the way, and having an imperial day." The same year, in the midst of all the anxieties of his war with Venice, he writes with keen delight :

> " We took yesterday, four great stags in the morning and five herons, after dinner. Wild ducks and herons we take every day in any number . . . for there are so many wonderful things here, and a whole aviary in this beautiful country. . . . Please God that you may some day see our hunting warren and aviary over here, and this fair country full of all delights.
>
> " Written by our hand, the 12th day of June 1510.
>
> " Your good father, MAXI."

On another occasion, he begs his daughter to send him at once the famous falconer, Aert van Meeghien, " our friend and faithful esquire," also two other falconers with all their birds, and he will pay anything to satisfy them. He learns with great satisfaction that his grandson Charles also loves the noble sport of hunting. In the middle of a serious war in the Netherlands, we find him sending the most minute directions as to where a special couple of hounds are to be kept in a cottage in the Tyrol and what is to be done with their puppies. In an autograph letter, he makes eager inquiry about a certain young ibex buck, which a peasant woman in a remote valley of the Tyrol was keeping for him, and he promises a silk dress each to some peasants' wives, if they will persuade their husbands not to poach this rare game, which it was his highest ambition to shoot with the crossbow.

On reading all this correspondence, we begin to understand what a keen and enthusiastic sportsman the Emperor proved himself. On his hunting expeditions, no exertion or discomfort was too great for him ; if there were no castle or even a cottage in the neighbourhood, he would be quite content to sleep in a rough log-hut, high up amid the mountain snows. From his bed of straw, he would set forth before dawn and climb the snowy ridge, with crampons on his feet, in pursuit of the chamois, and we have the most wonderful accounts of his adventures in this particular sport.

It was a most perilous matter to climb the mountain-side and approach near enough to the chamois to kill them either by throwing a short javelin or to pierce them with a long spear. Sometimes in those days, dogs were used on lower ground to drive the stags and chamois towards the huntsmen. Once with a crossbow he shot a chamois 200 yards above him, another time he caught one in a deep chasm which he had descended to rescue a friend.

There is a curious incident represented in one of the pictures, where a chamois swimming across a river is caught in a net; while waiting by the bank is Wolfgang, the Court Jew, wearing a turban and a yellow sash, with a bundle of documents in his hand. He has come to demand the payment of the money for which the Emperor is indebted to him, and his canny perseverance is rewarded at last, for the ducats are paid.

In his passion for sport the Emperor's endurance and hardihood were amazing; it is said that when no possible shelter was near at hand for the morrow's hunting, he would set forth in the middle of the night and cover enormous distances on horseback, getting back sometimes only after thirty-six hours in the saddle. We are told that he possessed the enormous number of fifteen hundred hounds of all kinds, and the finest falcons in the world for his hawking, which was always a favourite pursuit. He was also fond of fishing and wrote a handbook on the subject. He was so naïvely proud of his accomplishments, that he had been known to draw a line through the signature "Kaiser Max," and to replace it by "Great Huntsman."

The people in his hunting lands of the Tyrol were devoted to him, for his sympathetic tact in personal intercourse with all classes was a rare and most attractive quality. An anecdote is told of him that on one occasion when he was out hunting, he found a beggar dying by the roadside, and dismounting from his horse, he gave the poor man wine to drink from his own flask, wrapped his own warm mantle round him, and then rode in haste to the nearest village to summon a priest.

"Thou King of Austria shalt aways rejoice in the great pleasures of woodcraft, for thy health and refreshing, and for the comfort of thy subjects," was the ending of a Tyrolese petition, and shows the friendly feeling with which Maximilian was regarded.

CHAPTER XXIII

HIS BOOKS ILLUSTRATED BY ALBRECHT DÜRER AND OTHERS

Other literary works of Maximilian—"Genealogy of the House of Hapsburg," "Saints of the Family of Maximilian," "Triumphal Arch" and "Triumphal Procession," magnificently illustrated by Albrecht Dürer and others—The exquisite "Book of Prayer" of Maximilian, the gem of Albrecht Dürer's work, fully described.

IT was not only the Chronicle of his hunting feats and other brave deeds, which Maximilian was eager to behold set forth in quaint black letters and adorned with marvellous illustrations. He was a Hapsburg above all things, and the desire of his heart was ever to increase the honour and glory of his noble House. Thus it was that it occurred to him to trace the origin of his family from the shadows of the distant past, and to have a complete Genealogy drawn out of all his ancestors, at least as far back as the Flood. He set about the great work in serious earnest, and a number of learned men were engaged for the task of research, while general orders were given to seek and examine all the old manuscripts in the monasteries of the land.

It was presently announced by some scholar that the Emperor's Frankish ancestors must have been descended from the Trojans through the Romans, so that the connection was established that Maximilian was descended from Priam King of Troy. But there seemed to be some missing branch in a genealogical tree, and the Hapsburg Prince was so very particular that he required from the learned men proofs of their statements. He evidently had no sense of humour on this subject, for he seriously demanded absolute certainty with regard to the descent of his ancestor Clovis from Hector of Troy. Dr. Jacob Mennel, who was chief in authority, said that he had received this information from the Abbot Trithemius of Sponheim. Again the libraries were searched, but without success, and at last a new line of descent was started. Then the learned Doctor Stabius, poet, mathematician, and historiographer, pointed out that 209 years were filled up by only two historical personages named "Amprintas," and that they must have reached a very advanced age.

On this, the learned doctors quarrelled and abused each other, as only such scholars can, until Mennel found himself obliged to give up both genealogies and began with another, where Hector of Troy was again brought in, and this time both Maximilian and his learned scholars accepted the new theory.

An amusing story is told of the Emperor's Court Jester and friend, Kunz von der Rosen. He one day called up two tramps, a man and a woman, from the street and took them to Maximilian's room where the genealogical work was going on. "I present these kinsfolk to your Imperial Majesty, for you are alike descended from Abraham, and I would pray you to bestow pensions upon both of them." The beggars were promptly ordered out, but Kunz only laughed, and exclaimed: "Dear Kaiser, and thou, Mennel, are you not a pair of fools? Is it possible to trace out for the Emperor a long Genealogy without finding many disreputable relatives?"

It is interesting to notice that when Maximilian obtains his information through Bible history, he is very much afraid of falling into heresy by accident. He therefore appeals to his famous University of Vienna, and inquires whether he has done right in tracing his descent from Noah to Sicamber, the grandson of Hector? Thereupon a Committee of the University is formed and a solemn inquiry is made. The result is a very discreet and judicious document, in which interrogative notes are placed against various names. With regard to Sicamber a very clever plan is carried out to avoid giving offence:

"Quis autem fuit is Sicambrus quem Turnus genuerit nihil quod afferimus habemus certi." Unfortunately Maximilian died a month after this report was finished, and we do not know what he thought of it.

In the "Weisskünig," Noah appears as an ancestor of the Hapsburgs in the direct line, a fact "which had been forgotten and old writings neglected and lost, until by sending learned men without regard to cost, to search in all cloisters for books and to ask all scholars, the Weisskünig had proved it from one father to another."

The illustrations for the "Genealogy" were produced by the famous Hans Burgkmair, and consist of seventy-seven portraits of Maximilian's reputed ancestors. This was not published until after his death.

Another splendid book, noteworthy for containing 119 engravings by Burgkmair, was planned and carried out with much pious interest by the Emperor. It was to commemorate all the saints belonging to the family of Maximilian I, and we are amazed to find a noble and holy company, from every land and every age. The following are a few of the most familiar names: The Blessed Adelaide Empress of Germany; St. Bathilde Queen of France; St. Bridget, Abbess of Kilda; St. Cunégonde, wife of the Emperor Henry II; St. Elizabeth of Hungary; St. Gudule, Virgin, of Brabant; St. Hedwig Duchess of Poland; The Blessed Hildegarde, wife of Charlemagne; St. Radegonde Queen of France; St. Verona, Virgin; and St. Ursula. Of the saintly men, we may mention: St. Charlemagne Emperor and King of France; St. Clovis I, St. Dagobert, St. Louis IX, St. Robert, St. Sigebert, all Kings of France. Also the following Kings of England: St. Edgar, St. Edmond, St. Ethelbert King of Kent, St. Oswald, and St. Richard King of the Anglo-Saxons; St. Henry II Holy Roman Emperor, St. Ladislas I King of Hungary, St. Leo IX Pope, St. Wenceslaus Duke of Bohemia, St. Remy Bishop of Rheims, St. Thomas-à-Becket Archbishop of Canterbury, St. Wolfgang Bishop of Ratisbon; etc. etc. It must have required a great stretch of imagination to include these and other sainted characters, to the number of 119, amongst the kindred of Maximilian! It is indeed a strangely mingled company—with only the one connecting link, of saintliness—who thus "claimed kindred here, and had their claim allowed."

We must now touch upon the splendid works designed for Maximilian, when he was fortunate enough to obtain the devoted service of Albrecht Dürer at Nuremberg, during the years of 1507 to 1514. In the gorgeous "Triumphal Arch" (Ehrenpforte) we find ninety-two large woodcuts combined into one immense picture, to which the great artist gave two years of his life; it includes all the ancestors, mythical and real, of the Emperor, as well as a number of illustrations of his adventures. The same idea was carried on in the "Triumph Zug," and finally in the "Triumphwagen," which was only completed in 1516. Of this magnificent procession of triumphal cars, sixty-three woodcuts were drawn by Albrecht Dürer, while the remaining seventy-four were the work of Hans Burgkmair and Leonhard Beck. The illustrations are 34 inches wide and 20 inches high.[1]

This superb procession, which was to present Maximilian to the world as the highest of earthly princes, remains a lasting monument of his great position, of his territorial possessions, his wars, his conquests, his pleasures, his Landsknechte, his huntsmen, his jesters, his musicians, the fair ladies of his Court, combined with allegorical figures to represent every human and imperial virtue; some on foot, others on horseback, or grouped in triumphal cars drawn by strange animals.

Of the letterpress we are told: "All that which is written in this book was dictated by the Emperor Maximilian to me Marx Treitzsaurwein, Secretary to his Majesty, 1512." It is in fact only an explanation of the wonderful woodcuts.

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[1] The original is in the Hof Library at Vienna.

The procession begins with a magnificent Herald, who rides gallantly forward on a massive charger, and proclaims all the titles of the Emperor's vast dominions. Then follows on horseback, the Head Fifer, Anthony of Darmstadt, whose banner proudly proclaims: "I Anthony . . . have played the fife in many countries for the valorous Emperor Maximilian, in many great battles, also in tourneys." On the next page follow on horseback five splendid horsemen with fifes and drums, and long sabres by their side. They are decorated, as are most of these who take part in this procession, with the "crown of honour"[1]—a kind of laurel crown holding together five splendid plumes. The next picture shows Hans Teuschel, the Master Falconer, riding with a hunting pouch at his side; falcons in chase all round. He is followed by five falconers on horseback, four of them with a hawk each, and the fifth bearing an owl (used in falconry as a siren to attract the kite). Next Conrad Zubeck, head of the chamois hunters, follows on horseback, with five others behind, in doublet and breeches, shod with high shoes (tied to the ankle to keep out the stones). They carry cramp-irons, haversacks, and snow-hoops (to fasten on sole of foot, to prevent sinking into the snow).

The Master of the Stag-hounds, Conrad von Rot, comes next, with the usual number of five huntsmen on horseback, followed by five magnificent stags walking in a line. Then comes the same display for a wild-boar hunt, the men with swords, spears, and hunting-horns on foot, and five wild boars follow walking abreast. So the pageant of sport continues, and we pass on to the Triumph of Music. Here we have the most splendid cars, with five musicians in each. One in which they play on the lute and the "rebec" (violin with three strings) is drawn by two elks. The next, where the five players have pipes, trombones and trumpets, is drawn by buffaloes. Now comes the car drawn by a camel, in which the choir-master plays the organ, and we have the "regal" (an instrument then newly invented).

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[1] Worn over the helmet. It was introduced by the Crusaders, who copied it from the Saracens.

A splendid car of "Sweet Melody" follows, drawn by a dromedary. It contains musicians who play on the drum, the "quintaine" (like a long guitar), a great lute, a rebec, a violin, a loud flute (hautboy), a harp, and a large loud flute. All this has led the way to the car which bears the music of the Court Chapel, which is drawn by two bisons. Herr George Slakong Bishop of Vienna, the Chapel Master, is seated in pomp, surrounded by his choir.

We must hasten on, for time and space would fail to give any just idea of the magnificence of this triumphal procession; but we may briefly allude to a few more of the most interesting. In the car with the Jesters, drawn by two wild horses, the place of honour is taken by Kunz von der Rosen, the Court Jester, a great friend of Maximilian's, whose life he saved more than once. It is followed by cars filled with Fools (drawn by asses), by Mummers, by Masked Players, in the dress of ancient Swabians, and many others. One most striking point is the extreme care given to the most minute detail of costume, which varies all over the Empire. The Masters of Fencing and other like sports are shown with short staves, lances, halberds, battle-axes, drawn swords, naked knives, shields, and sabres. In the representatives of Tourney and Tilting, we find the most complete and interesting representations of ancient armour and weapons of all kind, and also in the splendid pictures displaying Jousts and Tournaments, Landsknechte from every province, heralds bearing the magnificent coats-of-arms and flowing banners of all the great lords of the Empire and its feudal vassals.

We are overwhelmed with such gorgeous magnificence, and can quite understand the intense personal interest felt by Maximilian, who constantly visited not only Dürer himself, but the "block-cutter" at his work, to take note of the smallest details of his mighty undertaking. Nor do we wonder that he sought to make others share his enthusiasm for the artist, and wrote to the Town Council of Nuremberg, demanding that Dürer should be exempt from:

"Common taxes and all other money contributions, in testimony of our friendship for him, and for the sake of the marvellous art of which it is but just that he should freely benefit. We trust that you will not refuse the demand we now make of you, because it is right, so far as possible, to encourage the arts he cultivates and so largely develops amongst you."

We cannot close the story of Maximilian's connection with the great artist, without giving some account of his most beautiful and exquisite work, in the artistic decoration of the Emperor's private Book of Prayer (Gebetbuch). This was Albrecht Dürer's last commission for his beloved master, with the exception of some portrait sketches, and is indeed the most precious, the very gem of the master's work.

In a copy of this Book, which is now in the Royal Library of Munich, forty-five leaves are decorated with marginal illustrations and ornaments drawn with the pen. No description can give any idea of their marvellous beauty of design and wealth of artistic invention. On the broad margin of the vellum pages, the master has drawn the most sublime and heavenly figures, fabulous monsters and real animals of all kinds, pictures from life, and the most glorious designs of twining plants, with flower and fruits, which spread out luxuriantly in every direction. A few bold strokes seem to have magic power to bring before us dreams of beauty in fantastic ornaments, which curl lightly round the words they illustrate—sometimes a decoration on one side of the page, sometimes a vignette at the foot. The first page, which expresses trust in God's protection, is illuminated with a rose bower where animals are playing, and in the midst, sits a man in tranquil content. There are prayers in which St. Barbara is mentioned, and she appears as a lovely young princess, and St. George, as a knight in armour, with uplifted spear in his right hand, while his left hand holds the neck of the conquered dragon.

Later on where, in the text, is a prayer to be said in the agony of death, a warrior in gorgeous attire seeks in vain to draw his sword against the weird apparition who advances with an hour-glass in his hand, while overhead, in a thunder-cloud, a heron is struck by a falcon. When a prayer for benefactors occurs, the master has drawn a pelican who tears open his bosom to feed his young, and a knight giving alms to a naked beggar. On the margin of the prayer for the departed, we see an angel bearing a soul out of the flames of purgatory, while little angels are blowing a refreshing breeze on those who are still enduring penance.

Where the word " temptation " is used in a prayer, it is illustrated by a soldier passing through a flowery garden, who pauses in doubt to listen to the note of a strange bird, while beyond, a fox decoys the fowls with a flute. To illustrate the eighth Psalm, birds singing amongst the flowers, and shepherds making music with their pipes, set forth the words: " O Lord our Governor, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth." We see King David kneeling with his harp before the God of Heaven ; St. John sits in the wilderness with his pen in his hand, gazing up at the radiant vision of the Queen of Heaven and the Infant Christ. In the loving allegory of the artist, the stem of the cross on which the agony of the Saviour is revealed, becomes a fair vine bearing grapes.

There is a splendid composition for the fifty-seventh Psalm, " Against the mighty," showing Christ in the cloud, with the orb in His left hand and His right hand raised to bless, while the Archangel Michael sweeps down and overthrows the Evil One. The words "Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be moved," are illustrated by exquisite designs of birds in the spreading branches, a child-angel bearing fruit, a dog at play, a column erect, and a man in peaceful sleep. For the ninety-eighth Psalm, "O sing unto the Lord," we have a company of musicians making solemn music outside the town, while their gladness is carried on by the waving foliage of trees in the meadow. On one occasion, the Virgin Mary is drawn on the margin in her fair youth, folding her hands in childlike prayer, while an angel holds a crown over her head and a fascinating little cherub plays the lute at her feet. Then, from time to time, follow pages with every variety of delicious ornament, figures in jest and earnest, and vagrant climbing plants fading away into mystic curves and flourishes.

At the beginning of the Te Deum is a most exquisite design. St. Ambrose the composer stands on one side, a stately figure in Bishop's robes, while below, the child Christ rides over the earth, an angel making ready the way before Him. Only a small selection can be made of the marvellous beauties of this unique book where "the genius of Albrecht Dürer has surrounded petitions breathing the spirit of the monk and the crusader, with a wealth of marginal ornament filled with the joy of life and beauty, as it woke in the Renaissance."[1] These exquisite drawings conclude with a picture which illustrates the words quoted, being radiant with joy and gladness in every touch, where youths and maidens dance together in an earthly paradise, to the sound of the pipe and cymbal, and show forth the words: "O be joyful in the Lord, all ye lands; serve the Lord with gladness."

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[1] R. Van Dyke, *American Review.*

Of this wonderful work of the great artist, only ten copies were printed at the time, and six more afterwards by Peter Cranach. It will ever remain a priceless and unique gem of artistic beauty.

Dürer took several interesting portraits of Maximilian. One was an oil painting, which now hangs in the Imperial Gallery at Vienna. It was taken shortly before the Emperor's death, and has a disappointed and mournful expression; he is clad in sombre flowing robes and wears a pointed black velvet hat with a clasp, from beneath which his long waving hair falls over the ears. There is also a wonderful chalk drawing taken at the Diet of Augsburg, (1518), where the features have the more hopeful spirit of his earlier days.[1] And there is a woodcut, finished shortly before the Emperor's death. In the beautiful picture by Dürer, the "Rosencranzfest," there is the kneeling figure of Maximilian, who is crowned by the Virgin with a wreath of roses, while the Infant Christ crowns Pope Julius II on the other side; a number of distinguished persons are being crowned in the same way by St. Dominic and a company of angels. The artist himself appears in the background with his dear friend Wilibald Pirkheimer. A sheet of paper in Dürer's hand proclaims: "The German Albrecht Dürer carried out this work in 1506, in the space of five months."[2]

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[1] Frontispiece of this book.

[2] It is now in the Premonstratensian Monastery at Prague.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE TRUE GREATNESS OF MAXIMILIAN

The greatness of Maximilian most fully shown in his warm encouragement of the new spirit in art and literature—He restores and renews the University of Vienna—German Humanists in Strasburg, Augsburg, and Nuremberg—Maximilian encourages music, art, architecture, etc.—His stately tomb at Innsbrück—His greatest title to remembrance in the love and admiration of his people.

WE have followed the course of Maximilian's eventful life, we have studied the various works by which he hoped to live for posterity; but in none of these, interesting as they are, do we find his true greatness. The Emperor's claim to the gratitude of his country and of future ages, lies in the whole-hearted devotion with which he led the onward movement of his day and encouraged Literature, Art, and Science in their newest development.

It is interesting to notice the vital difference between the Renaissance in Italy, where it was aristocratic and courtly, and in Germany, where it took root in the soul of the people. The spirit of Italian art was a revolt against ascetism and a revival of splendid paganism, full of the "dear love of earth," of outward, sensuous beauty. From this Pantheon of æsthetic delight, the Northern mind turned to more sternly intellectual and ethical purposes, and was inspired from the first with a moral aim and ideal. It was fitly represented by the serious art of Dürer, and by the lofty and powerful language of the great German Humanists of the Renaissance. The chief strength of this movement was in the cities, whose political and intellectual development was so striking at this time, and amongst these, Strasburg, Augsburg, and Nuremberg take the lead. An old writer describes them thus: "Strasburg, the most beautiful of the German towns, a treasure and ornament of the Fatherland"; "Augsburg, where Rome and its Quirites have wandered," and "Nuremberg, the Corinth of Germany, if one looks at the wonderful works of the artist; yet if you look at its walls and bastions, no Mummius would conquer it so easily."[1]

It was the supreme achievement of Maximilian that in this new movement, he was the connecting-link between the various schools of advanced thought, and thus was able, from his high position, to build up the isolated efforts of distant thinkers into one consistent whole. The Emperor had already shown his power of organisation in the splendid work of restoring the University of Vienna, which, in 1490, had almost fallen into decay during the storms of war with Matthias of Hungary, when the Emperor Frederick III was driven from his capital, a wanderer and an outcast.

Maximilian set himself to the difficult task of trans-

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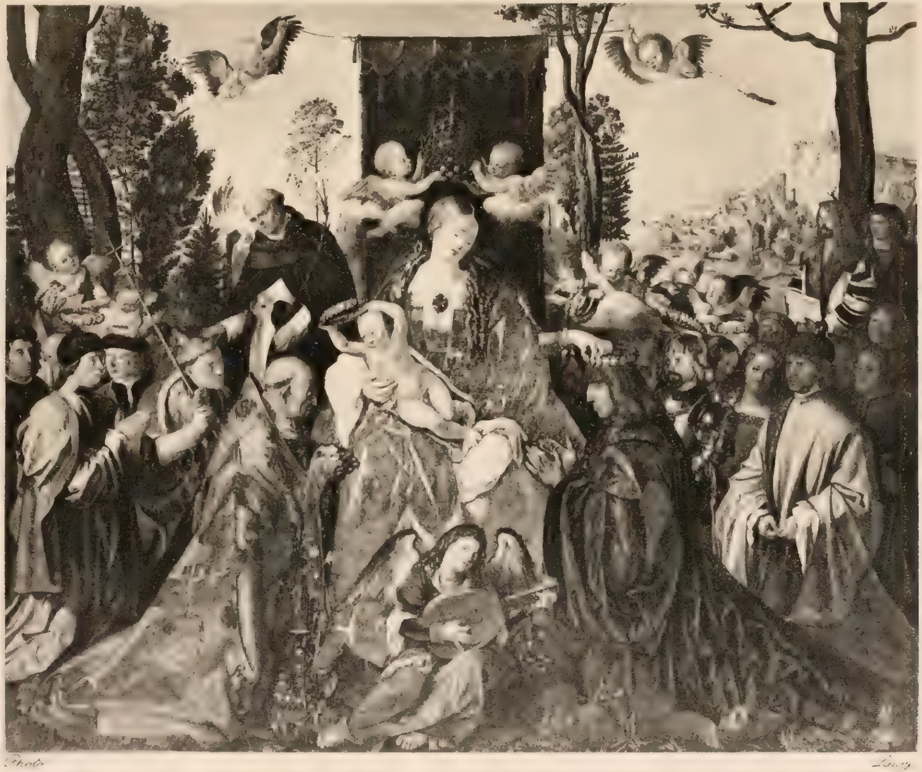
[1] Geiger, "Renaissance and Humanism," p. 360. Quoted by R. W. Seton Watson.



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Das Rosenkranzfest.

(Maximilian Crowned)

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forming the narrow clerical scheme of teaching, to the broad and liberal methods of the new Humanists, who soon took the leading part in Philosophy; and before very long, the Medical Faculty threw off the bondage of Scholasticism, and studied anatomy and the laws of disease from actual experience rather than from monkish tradition. The Emperor desired that severe penalties should be inflicted on foreign physicians who showed themselves incapable. We have already alluded to Maximilian's encouragement of the study of Roman Law as well as ecclesiastical. Besides these studies he established three chairs for Mathematics, Rhetoric, and Poetry. The crown of the poet was given by him, in 1493, to Cuspinian, one of those delightful wandering scholars of this period, who had been attracted to the restored University of Vienna, like so many others. He soon began to give lectures on his favourite subject, in which he drew attention to the writings of Cicero and Sallust, Horace and Virgil. Eager to obtain the best professors for his University, Maximilian summoned Italian Humanists from across the Alps. But these were not so successful as the German professors who succeeded them in 1497, when Celtes and Stabius were appointed professors.

Conrad Celtes deserves a special mention as a scholar of great learning and experience, who had studied in the chief universities of Germany and also in Italy, where he had become wise in all the doctrines of the Humanists. As early as 1487, he had been crowned poet by Frederick III at the Diet of Nuremberg, and after ten years of study and travel he was promoted by

Maximilian to be Professor of Rhetoric and Poetry at Vienna. He met with some opposition on account of the Neo-Platonist views which he had brought from Italy, but the Emperor always gave him the warmest support, and, in 1501, appointed his friend Cuspinian as Superintendent of the University. In order that the new method of education might triumph more completely, Maximilian founded, under the direction of Celtes, "a new institute for the training of Humanists, not outside but inside the University"; a College for poets and mathematicians as a centre for liberal studies in Vienna. Conrad Celtes died in 1508, after a strenuous and successful career, and his post was given to Stabius, who was also made Imperial Historiographer.

Maximilian gave warm encouragement to the Hapsburg University at Freiburg, and he would gladly have joined with Jacob Wimpheling in founding a University at Strasburg, but was prevented by want of means. Wimpheling, who had been educated at the famous Deventer School, was one of a zealous company who have been called the Christian Humanists, and is distinguished as a "priest, a scholar, teacher, journalist, and patriot," and in this last character was a man after Maximilian's own heart. In his "Germania," Wimpheling says:

"We are Germans, not French, and our land must be called Germany, not France. . . . This fact has been acknowledged by the Romans. . . . Our city and all Alsace does well to preserve the freedom of the Roman Empire, and will surely maintain it in the future, so that attempts of France will be vain, to win over or conquer us."

He was employed by the Emperor to recount the grievances of the German nation to Pope Julius II, and later to consider means of redressing their wrongs, "without touching religion."

Another man of letters who had a great reputation in his day was Sebastian Brant, a famous German Humanist, city clerk of Strasburg. His most popular book was the "Ship of Fools" (Narren-Schiff) which was circulated by thousands amongst all classes; being brought within their reach by the invention of printing.[1] In this curious allegory, which fearlessly attacks abuses of all kinds, the satirist describes the Ship of the World, laden with fools whose destination is "Narrgonia," the Fool's Paradise. On the way thither, it is wrecked by Antichrist, and the travellers, at the mercy of the waves, seek shelter as best they can. With this as his plot, Brant pours scathing condemnation on the evils which he sees around him. He declares that all classes are to blame: merchants are dishonest, they have short measures, light weights, pass false money, sell lame horses by craft, and imitation furs for real ones. He passes on to dwell on the failings of rich and poor, in which the clergy come in for their full share.

He has a strange theory that printing will upset the world, and he describes the sea after the wreck as strewn with books of heresy. Yet Sebastian himself can scarcely claim to be orthodox, for although a deep moral earnestness pervades his jests and satire, and he bids man look only to the future life as his goal, he does not point out the Church as the way of salvation and omits all mention of intercession to the Virgin or Saints. He would have man deal directly with God, and be responsible to him alone; wisdom is the one thing needful, and this will ensure obedience to God and a virtuous life. He selects amongst his examples, Hercules, Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato, Penelope, and Virgil; a varied collection from classic paganism to suit all tastes. The book is written in the Swabian dialect.

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[1] First printed in Basel, 1494.

Brant was a devoted admirer of Maximilian, from the time of his election as King of the Romans, when he declared that "with such a prince the Golden Age must return," for he was an earnest believer in that splendid dream of the Middle Ages, the universal temporal monarchy of the Emperor. Sebastian's deep personal affection for Maximilian hid from him the fact that such high ideals were not realised by his brilliant, chivalric lord, and on the Emperor's death, he cries in bitter lament:

"O magnanimous Cæsar, that hope is vanished which we had founded on thee, while the sceptre was in thine hand. How can I restrain my tears! Thou wert worthy to live, sole anchor of safety for the German nation. One swift hour hath taken thee from us; thou art no more, and misfortune awaits the Empire."

We must now turn from Strasburg and its Humanists to the rival city of Augsburg, where thought was rather directed towards history and politics than to theology and education. This famous city, on the direct trade route from Venice and the East, was greatly beloved by Maximilian, who spent here many of the happiest hours of his life. Frequent Diets were held here (1500, 1510, 1518), and there was not only a taste for Italian culture, but some of the chief merchants encouraged the ardent study of the classics. The most noteworthy scholar of Augsburg at this time was Conrad Peutinger, who was singled out by the Emperor as ambassador, and secretary, with the additional honour of presenting formal orations whenever necessary. In intellectual and artistic matters, he soon became invaluable to Maximilian, who was a keen judge of talent, and neglected no means which would place his country first in every art and science.

He encouraged Peutinger to collect and publish old German inscriptions, and the two friends worked together in the discovery and classification of ancient coins, of which a very fine collection was brought together at Augsburg, from all parts of the Empire. In 1506, the Emperor received Peutinger at Vienna, and gave him a new branch of knowledge to investigate; nothing less than a profound and exhaustive study of letters and documents concerning the House of Hapsburg. A special chamber was given up to him in the castle of Vienna, and here he examined all the papers and documents brought to him. Besides these family records, the learned scholar published a number of old chronicles selected by the Emperor, some of them being of special value. Peutinger also assisted Maximilian in the preparation of his numerous books, and supervised the woodcuts and engravings.

He was also expected to know all about armour and arms of war, and to see that the Emperor's minute directions were carefully carried out. He was even asked to select names for the new cannons; a hundred famous ladies of antiquity being suggested.

Maximilian does not appear to have availed himself of the art of Hans Holbein, the most distinguished artist of the Augsburg school, but this was probably because he was a wanderer and in such great demand in other countries.

Nuremberg, the third centre of German Humanism, is in many ways the most interesting, alike for its beautiful churches, its stately buildings, merchant palaces, and picturesque streets—as for the many distinguished names which composed its literary circle. Amongst many names well known to fame; historians, mathematicians, Hebrew scholars, Humanist preachers, poets, and painters—we may mention Meisterlin, who wrote the Nuremberg Chronicle, Osiander the theologian, and Hans Sachs (1494–1578) the cobbler poet, who wrote an elegy on the death of Luther, but is best remembered by his satirical poems, "The Land of Cockayne" and the "Children of Eve," in which he gives a fantastic story of ten imaginary children born to Adam and Eve after the Fall. Speaking of the death of Abel, Sachs gives a striking scene between Satan and Cain, but neither the humour nor the satire of his works would appeal to us much at the present day, although they were extremely popular on their first appearance.

In that atmosphere of free thought, we are not surprised to hear that Johann von Staupitz—Vicar of Luther's Augustinian Order, a Humanist, deeply imbued with the views of earlier mystics, such as Eckart and Tauler—preached a series of sermons at Nuremberg in 1516, which had an immense success. In these he warned men against trusting too much to confession, for only the Grace of God could ensure them justification. His sermons were printed in German as well as in Latin, and a society was formed for their study in Nuremberg, which was joined by Albrecht Dürer and many of his friends. A year later Staupitz wrote the work, "On the Love of God," full of the same mystical teaching, which he dedicated to the sister of Maximilian, the Duchess Kunigonda, of Bavaria.

But the chief friend of the Emperor in this city was the distinguished merchant and Councillor, Wilibald Pirkheimer, with whose enthusiasm for learning and his joyous happy nature, Maximilian had so much in common. In this intimate friendship, Albrecht Dürer, of whom so much has already been said, formed a third. His letters to Pirkheimer, during his absence at Venice, are full of characteristic sympathy and close observation; most interesting to read.

Pirkheimer is one of the most typical figures of the German Renaissance. He was educated in all the Humanities, law, letters, and art, at the famous Universities of Padua and Pavia, and not only gave his sovereign the advantage of his diplomatic talent, but was also prodigal with his wealth in the service of his country. It is impossible to give any idea of the charm of his character or the broad range of his intellectual powers, in this brief sketch. Yet the brilliant success with which he represented the great movement of his time, and the noble courage with which he defended his friend Reuchlin when attacked by the Church, were destined to pathetic eclipse in his latter days of depression and disappointment. Although he was no Lutheran, yet the name of Wilibald Pirkheimer stood first on the list of those to be excommunicated which Johann Eck brought from Rome to Nuremberg. In later years, saddened and disappointed, he sought peace by returning to the strictest tenets of Romanism.

> Too frail to wear the lofty crown of martyrdom,
> He faltered, drifted to and fro, and passed away.

We have no space to dwell longer upon the literary friends and interests of Maximilian, interesting as they are, while of his keen delight in Art and warm encouragement of such artists as Albrecht Dürer, Burgkmair, Beck, and others, we have already spoken. The Emperor was also passionately fond of music and devoted much care to the revival of its ancient glories. We have seen in the great Triumphal Procession how Anthony of Darmstadt, the Head Fifer, prides himself on the martial music, whose resounding melody and stirring strains had helped to win many a battle in foreign lands.

In splendid Cars of the Triumph, we also find the Chapel Master, George Slakong, Bishop of Vienna, and the Choir Master, Heinrich Isaac, who for twelve years had been in the service of Lorenzo the Magnificent of Florence, and whose valuable teaching had brought the music of Maximilian's Court Chapel, to a splendid height of musical attainment. He it was who is said to have set to music the pathetic poem "Innsbrück, ich muss dich lassen," which tradition attributes to the pen of the Emperor. The Court organist, Paul Hofheimer, was one of the first musicians of the day, and he did much to raise the science of organ-playing to a high level in Germany. In short, the music of the Court Chapel was famous throughout Europe.

Of Maximilian's interest in Architecture, we have many examples in the various castles which he built, and churches and palaces throughout the land. Perhaps one of the most interesting, is the royal palace at Innsbrück, built after his marriage with Bianca Sforza, and famous for its "Golden Roof," built over a beautiful oriel window with two-storied balconies. The delicate balustrades are decorated with carved armorial bearings and massive shields in marble, while on the second floor is a sculptured bas-relief of the Emperor Maximilian and his two wives, and seven coats-of-arms of various provinces of the Empire.

As for the "Golden Roof," it is composed of 3,450 tiles of copper-gilt, and is said to have cost 30,000 ducats (about £14,000), and has always been the pride of the city.

The kindred subject of sculpture leads us to consider the final and most magnificent memorial of the Emperor Maximilian, in the Hof Kirche of Innsbrück, where his kneeling figure, resting upon a great sarcophagus of marble in the nave, is the centre of a mighty pageant. The four cardinal virtues are in close attendance, and twenty-four most beautiful pictures, carved in relief around the monarch's tomb, tell the story of his life. These are by the hand of the famous Alexander Colin of Malines;—for the greatest artists of the day were engaged upon this supreme effort of German art.

But that which strikes us most is the stately procession of exquisite bronze figures representing the noble rulers of the House of Hapsburg, all those whom Maximilian had loved and honoured in the past, and those who had been dear to him in life; Marie de Bourgogne the wife of his youth, his son Philippe, lost too soon, and his daughter Marguerite who survived him to carry on the highest traditions of his race. We see them all standing, as silent watchers and torchbearers,[1] calmly awaiting the solemn hour of reunion. Splendid amongst them all rise the two mighty figures of Theodoric the Great and Arthur, the gallant champion of the Round Table; two of the unforgotten heroes of the young Maximilian's early dreams of chivalry. The genius of Peter Vischer, the glory of Nuremburg, makes these two magnificent statues almost live and breathe before us. Yet we turn away from this dream of beauty with a sense of unreality, as we remember that the central figure of this great pageant was laid to rest, by his own desire, in far-off Wiener Neustadt, his birthplace.

The craving for a lasting memorial, for future fame and greatness, which is so vividly set forth in this magnificent tomb in the Hof Kirche, is illustrated in a pathetic manner by a few words in the "Weisskünig." Maximilian was once blamed by a noble of his Court for spending anything upon "remembrance," as that was money lost. This was the earnest reply:

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[1] All the figures, except two, have the hand extended for holding a torch.

"Who doth not make for himself in his life remembrance, he has after his death no remembrance, and is forgotten with the toll of the bell. And therefore the gold I spend for remembrance is not lost, but the gold I save in the matter of memorials is a lessening of my future remembrance. And what I do not finish for my remembrance in my lifetime, will not be made up for, either by thee or any one else."

The same thought is thus expressed by a modern poet:

> He died, and in his place was set his son.
> He died, and in a few days every one
> Went on their way as though he had not been.

Yet may we not believe that the Emperor did something towards attaining this "remembrance," his heart's desire? For the memory of some men is enshrined by tradition, not so much for their great deeds, as for a certain charm and glamour by which they were surrounded. And surely this was notably the case with "Kaiser Max,"[1] although to those who remember his faults and his failures, he may be looked upon as a visionary idealist. His devoted people forgot everything but his splendid valour, and the matchless charm of manner and sympathy, which made their Emperor so lovable a personality that his memory was cherished as the typical Hero-King. It was thus that they sang of him in the popular Volklied, with which we bid him farewell:

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[1] As his people loved to call him.

First among earthly monarchs,
  A fount of honour clear,
Sprung of a noble lineage,
  Where shall we find his peer? . . .
He stands a bright example
  For other Princes' eyes,
The lieges all appraise him
  The Noble and the Wise.
His justice is apportioned
  To poor and rich the same.
Just, before God Eternal
  Shall ever be his name.
And God the Lord hath willed it,
  Our pure, immortal King,
And welcomed him in glory
  Where ceaseless praises ring.
Our hero hath departed,
  Time's sceptre laying down,
Since God hath, of His goodness,
  Prepared a deathless crown.[1]

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[1] Quoted in Geiger, "Renaissance und Humanismus," p. 345. Translated by R. W. Seton Watson.

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